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County Road & Street Standards  
Exception Request

November 26, 2025

*Via Electronic Mail and Napa County File Sharing*

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Re: P22-00086; Application for Use Permit Major Modification  
Bremer Family Winery  
Request for Exception to the Napa County Road and Street  
Standards, 975 Deer Park Road, St. Helena [APNs 021-400-002 &  
021-420-027]  
Our File No. 05296-002

Dear Mr. Bordona and Mr. Lederer:

This office represents the Bremer Family Winery (“Winery”) and submits this letter on its behalf. In connection with application No. P22-00086, the Winery respectfully requests an exception to the County’s left-turn lane warrant requirement established by Section 17 of the Napa County Road and Street Standards (“RSS”). This request is made pursuant to Section 3 of the Napa County RSS, which authorizes the County to grant exceptions to RSS standards in cases like this. The Winery’s request is supported by the information summarized in this letter, the Left Turn Constraints Exhibit prepared by RSA+ (attached hereto as **Exhibit A**), the Supplemental Traffic Analysis prepared by GDH (attached hereto as **Exhibit B**), the Tree Survey and Habitat Assessment Letter Report (the “Biological Analysis”) prepared by Monk & Associates Inc. (attached hereto as **Exhibit C**). As demonstrated by these analyses, an exception is necessary, consistent with Section 3 of the Napa County RSS, and should be granted for the following reasons:

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1. **Environmental Protection.** Granting the exception is necessary to preserve unique features of the natural environment that would be permanently lost by developing a left turn lane. Specifically:
  - a. **Heritage Oak Trees and Protected Trees of Significant Importance.** Development of a left turn lane would result in unavoidable adverse impacts to 21 protected trees of significant importance that are part of an oak woodland and are well over 6 inches in diameter at breast height (“DBH”). (**Exhibit C**, pp. 1, 3, 5-6.)
    - i. Of these, **17 protected trees, including four (4) heritage oak trees, would be slated for removal.** (**Exhibit C**, pp. 1, 5-6.) These heritage oak trees include Coast Live Oak trees that are 38.6” and 35” DBH, respectively.
    - ii. Additionally, a total of four (4) protected trees of significant importance, including one (1) heritage oak tree, would be at substantial risk of irreversible damage through severe limbing and/or root system impacts. (*Ibid.*)
    - iii. **As determined by expert biologists, these trees are unique features of the natural environment that should be protected** due to their size, substantial habitat benefits, and their location at the edge of a contiguous oak woodland. (**Exhibit C**, pp. 1-6.) The trees, some of which survived the Glass Fire in 2020, further provide erosion control, visual screening, and aesthetic value by creating a forested corridor. These established trees are virtually irreplaceable and should be preserved. (See *ibid.*)
  - b. **Preservation of Steep Slopes Composed of Solid Rock.** Development of a left turn lane would require substantial grading of two (2) steep, nearly vertical cut slopes immediately adjacent to the narrow roadway shoulder, which consist of natural rock features and are forested with many protected trees. (Napa County RSS, Section 3(d)(i); **Exhibit A**, Attachment One; **Exhibit C**, p. 3.) As illustrated in **Exhibit A**, up to 20 feet of cut would be required on Cut Slope No. 1, and up to 10 feet of cut would be required on Cut Slope No. 2,

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respectively.<sup>1</sup> The substantial construction that would be required to install a left-turn lane should not occur here.

2. **Physical Site Limitations.** The exception is necessary to accommodate site limitations including:
  - a. On the western side of Deer Park Road, existing roadway conditions, which include a minimal 1-foot shoulder bordered by forested cut slopes composed of solid rock, limit the ability to develop a left-turn lane without causing substantial environmental damage.
  - b. On the western side of Deer Park Road, an active Howell Mountain Mutual Water Company (“HMMWC”) water main runs along the cut slopes. (See **Exhibit C**, p. 3.) This water main is located within the anticipated construction area. Relocating the water line is not feasible. This exception request is necessary to protect this essential infrastructure.
  - c. On the eastern side of Deer Park Road, roadway widening necessary to accommodate a left-turn lane would require relocation of significant public utility facilities, including a major junction power pole. Relocating these facilities would disrupt the provision of essential telecommunications services. (*Id.* at § 3(d)(ii).)
3. **Historic Sites and Legal Constraints.** The exception is necessary to preserve historic resources and due to legal constraints. Specifically:
  - a. Widening to the west would occur beyond an existing fence and onto private property. In addition to encroaching upon this private property and destroying the landowner’s fence, this widening would damage two (2) large Coast Live Oaks on this parcel, including removal of a 30” DBH heritage oak and irreversible damage of a 17” DBH oak that

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<sup>1</sup> / As illustrated in **Exhibit A**, this road widening would be accomplished through multiple 2:1 cuts, which requires two times the land area for widening compared to a flat surface. When widening a road on a slope, the slope above (cut) or below (fill) must be reshaped to remain stable. For example, where Deer Park Road would be widened by approximately 10 feet at Cut Slope No. 1 to accommodate a left turn lane, a total of 20 feet of cut would be required.

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nearly qualifies as a heritage oak (i.e., 18" DBH). (**Exhibit A; Exhibit C**, p. 5.)

- b. If Deer Park Road is widened to the east, then the Winery's 100-year stone wall and mailbox would have to be dismantled and reconstructed. The historic mailbox, just off the roadway shoulder is within the relevant construction area. The entire stone wall, part of the Winery's gate, would require relocation to maintain compliance with the County's 30-foot driveway setback requirement. (*Id.* at Section 3(d)(iii).) This historic stonework cannot be reproduced and must be protected.
- c. On the western side of Deer Park Road, development of a left-turn lane would require the roadway to be widened by up to 4 feet at a private driveway. This, in turn, would require the driveway to be modified to ensure compliance with Napa County RSS Detail P-2. These modifications would likely adversely impact the driveway's drainage, slope, and historic stone walls. It is reasonably foreseeable that some of this work may require encroachment outside the public right of way. (Napa County RSS, Section 3(d)(iii).)
4. **No Impact on Public Safety.** Due to its relatively isolated location in the scarcely populated Angwin area, there are virtually no left turns currently occurring or expected with the proposed use permit modifications. Unless winery guests live in the vicinity of White Cottage Road and/or the Angwin area, 100 percent (100%) of guest visitation originates through the Napa Valley via Deer Park Road (i.e., right turns) and Sanitarium Road (i.e., across Deer Park Road into the Winery after stop sign). Considering these facts and the relatively low volumes on Deer Park Road, the existing condition without a left-turn lane has essentially the same effect on safety as would be experienced with a turn lane. (**Exhibit B.**) As such, the exception will have no impact on public safety. (Napa County RSS, Section 3(e).)

In sum, this exception request is based on clear, demonstrable and unavoidable environmental impacts and physical site limitations that meet the standards set forth in the Napa County RSS, Section 3, and the Winery respectfully requests

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that it be granted. This is precisely the type of situation in which the County's authority to grant limited and well-supported exceptions is intended to apply.

**I. Background: The Updated Traffic Study Concludes that the Winery's Application Triggers the County's Left-Turn Lane, Despite the Lack of Left Turns into the Winery.**

The Updated Traffic Study Report for the Proposed Bremer Family Use Modification Project, prepared by GDH, dated August 12, 2025 ("Traffic Study") analyzed traffic flows at the Winery and on the proximate roadway system. Based on strict application of the Napa County RSS, the Traffic Study found the operational adjustments requested in the Winery's application trigger the "warrant" for a southbound left turn lane at the inbound project driveway on Deer Park Road. (Traffic Study, pp. 19-20.) While the RSS does not account for the direction of traffic, the Traffic Study analyzed southbound left-turn volumes on Deer Park Road at the Winery's driveway and found:

Based on weekday Friday PM peak period (4:00-6:00 p.m.) and Saturday mid-day peak hour (1:00-3:00 p.m.) counts conducted at the Sanitarium Road-Bremer Family Winery Driveway/Deer Park Road; **one (1) southbound left-turn movement was observed at the Bremer Family Winery driveway from Deer Park Road. Based on discussions with the project applicant, all guest visitation originates from the Napa Valley area via Deer Park Road.** Visitors and guests to the winery do not typically originate from areas to the north via Deer Park Road (White Cottage Road, Angwin, & Howell Mountain Road). The vast majority of guests use Deer Park Road to/from the south and/or Sanitarium Road to/from the west to access the proposed project site. Consequently, there would **be virtually no demand for a southbound left-turn lane on Deer Park Road at the Bremer Family Winery north driveway.**

(Traffic Study, p. 20 [emphasis added].)

GHD further confirmed the lack of any practical need for a left-turn lane into the Winery in the Supplemental Traffic Analysis attached hereto as **Exhibit B**. This supplemental analysis, based upon the Winery's actual traffic counts and

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conditions, demonstrates that a left-turn lane would not be required under the widely accepted Caltrans and American Association of State Highway Engineers (“AASHTO”) methodologies, which account for the actual volume of left-turn movements and traffic speeds. (**Exhibit B**, pp. 2-4.)<sup>2</sup>

These conclusions are consistent with the prior traffic analyses prepared for the Winery. For example, the *Focused Traffic Analysis; Bremer Family Winery Use Modification Project* dated June 1, 2018 (R2303TIA003) (“June 2018 Traffic Study”), found “there were zero (0) southbound left-turn movements observed at the Bremer Family Winery driveway from Deer Park Road” during the peak period. (June 2018 Traffic Study, p. 23.) The June 2018 Traffic Study further concluded: “Currently, existing count volume data conducted on both a weekday and weekend peak period on Deer Park Road at the project driveway indicate that there are no southbound left-turn movements into the site from Deer Park Road. By comparing the advancing and opposing Deer Park Road volumes with the percentage of left turning vehicles into the project driveway, the volumes are well below the Caltrans and AASHTO minimum volume thresholds at which a left turn lane would be warranted.” (*Id.* at p. 22.)

## **II. The Exception Request is Consistent with Napa County RSS, Section 3, the County’s Conservation Regulations, and the General Plan.**

The following discussion outlines the relevant regulatory framework through which the County must evaluate this exception request. These authorities include the Napa County RSS, Section 3, the County’s Conservation Regulations, and the County’s General Plan. As demonstrated below, these interconnected laws and planning documents establish a strong policy in favor of protecting the County’s natural resources and avoiding construction in environmentally sensitive areas, which are among the primary purposes of this request.

### **A. Napa County RSS, Section 3 Is Intended To Apply to Well-Documented Exception Requests Such as This.**

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<sup>2</sup> / The Caltrans methodology was developed in 1985. The AASHTO methodology, developed in 2018, provides more recent and comprehensive industry-standard approach. (**Exhibit B**, pp. 2-3.)

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Section 3(d) of the Napa County RSS provides for exceptions to established standards when one or more of the following findings can be made and the findings in subsection (e) can also be made:

- i. The exception will preserve unique features of the natural environment which includes, but is not limited to, natural water courses, steep slopes, geological features, heritage oak trees, or other trees of least six inches in diameter at breast height and found by the decision-maker to be of significant importance, but does not include human altered environmental features such as vineyards and ornamental or decorative landscaping, or artificial features such as, rock walls, fences or the like;
- ii. The exception is necessary to accommodate physical site limitations such as grade differentials; and/or
- iii. The exception is necessary to accommodate other limiting factors such as recorded historical sites or legal constraints.

Section 3(e) of the Napa County RSS states:

The Zoning Administrator, Planning Commission, or other approving body shall not grant an exception unless it finds that grant of the exception, as conditioned by the Zoning Administrator, the Planning Commission, or other approving body provides the same overall practical effect as these Standards towards providing defensible space, and consideration towards life, safety and public welfare. Monetary hardship alone shall not be considered as a basis for an exception.

Here, all grounds set forth in Section 3(d) are satisfied, each of which gives the County an independent basis to grant the exception request.<sup>3</sup> Section 3(e) is also satisfied because approving the Winery's application without a left-turn lane would have no impact on public safety due to the lack of left turns into the Winery.

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<sup>3</sup> / As provided in Napa County RSS Section 3, an exception may be granted if one of the identified grounds is satisfied.

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Note that the County does not have a fixed definition of “heritage oak tree.” The County recognizes that its “remaining oak woodlands continue to serve as a reminder of our cultural and historical heritage.” (Voluntary Oak Woodland Management Plan (2010), p. 8.) Given the various threats to the County’s oak woodland communities, including a lack of regeneration, low acorn production due to a lack of cross pollination, fire damage, habitat conversion, and climate change, the County’s primary intent is to protect all oak trees to maintain in-tact ecosystems. (*Id.* at pp. 30-36; Napa County General Plan, p. CON-30.) As such, whether a tree is a “heritage oak” that requires preservation under Napa County RSS, Section 3(d)(i) is a fact-specific inquiry.

In determining whether the affected oak trees are heritage trees, the County is encouraged to consider the definition of a “Heritage Tree” adopted by the City of San Mateo, which includes: “Any oak (*Quercus* spp.) tree with a trunk that has a diameter of ten inches or more (31.4 inches in circumference), measured at 54 inches above natural grade.” (City of San Mateo Municipal Code, § 13.40.030(k).) This definition is particularly relevant because live oak species are the most prevalent in both the County and San Mateo. (See Voluntary Oak Woodland Management Plan (2010), pp. 14-15, B-1-B-2, C-2.) The Marin County Code Municipal Code contains similar definitions of “Protected Tree” and “Heritage Tree,” with all oaks with a DBH of at least 6 inches “protected trees” and with a DBH of at least 18 inches “heritage trees.” (Marin County Municipal Code, Art. VIII, Ch. 22.130.)

**Based upon these definitions and the least protective interpretation, the Biological Analysis conservatively determined that installation of a left-turn lane would impact a total of 21 protected trees and require four (4) heritage oak trees to be cut down, with irreversible damage to an additional heritage oak.** (Exhibit C, pp. 2-6.)

#### **B. The Exception Request is Consistent with and In Furtherance of the County’s General Plan and Conservation Regulations.**

The exceptions to the Napa County RSS are part of a broader framework of Napa County General Plan (“General Plan”) policies and ordinances. This exception request is consistent with and in furtherance of these foundational policies and requirements.

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### **1. The General Plan Contains Strong Protections for Oak Trees Located on Steep Slopes.**

“According to the California Oak Foundation, Napa County, with approximately 167,450 acres of oak woodlands comprising 33 percent of the county, has the highest density of oak woodlands in the state.” (General Plan, p. CON-4.) “These oak woodlands are one of the defining features of Napa County’s scenery, and provide numerous recreational and ecological benefits.” (Napa County Voluntary Oak Woodland Management Plan (2010), p. 6.) To protect oak woodland habitat, General Plan Policy CON-24 sets forth several measures, including:

- (1) To retain, to the maximum extent feasible, existing oak woodland communities and other significant vegetation as part of the County’s discretionary approvals.
- (2) To avoid the removal of oak species limited in distribution (e.g., valley oaks) to the maximum extent feasible.
- (3) To require retention of adequate stands of oak trees sufficient for wildlife, slope stabilization and soil protection.

(General Plan, p. CON-30.)

Pursuant to General Plan Action Item CON NR-7, the County adopted the Voluntary Oak Woodland Management Plan to provide a conservation framework for the preservation of the County’s oak woodland resources. (*Id.* at CON-35.) The Voluntary Oak Woodland Management Plan is intended to protect the long-term health and viability of the County’s oak resources by promoting objectives, including:

1. Encourage the long-term stewardship and vitality of existing oak woodlands to maintain or improve oak woodland resource values;
2. **Encourage land use, transportation, and infrastructure planning that is consistent with oak woodlands conservation efforts;** and
3. Maximize the total amount of oak woodland canopy cover to achieve erosion, flood, habitat, and air quality protection benefits, while

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recognizing the importance of including a variety of canopy cover levels within conserved and restored woodlands to provide habitat diversity.

(Voluntary Oak Woodland Management Plan (2010), p. 7 [emphasis added].)

This exception request is consistent with and promotes these objectives. Regarding transportation planning and oak woodland conservation, the Voluntary Oak Woodland Management Plan specifically recognizes infrastructure development (e.g., roadway expansion) as one of the three primary land use threats that drive habitat conversion:

Local and regional growth in tourism, jobs, and housing increases demand for new infrastructure, **including highway and road expansion**, as well as electrical, water and wastewater services. The end result of this demand is often the expansion of infrastructure projects which can temporarily or permanently impact existing oak woodlands. On a more regional level, large roadway expansion projects will likely continue to threaten California's oak woodland resources.

(Voluntary Oak Woodland Management Plan (2010), p. 35 [emphasis added].)

As a solution to prevent needless loss of oak woodlands and other significant trees, Napa County RSS, Section 3(d)(i) allows exceptions to the Napa County RSS to "preserve unique features of the natural environment," including "heritage oak trees, or other trees at least six inches in diameter at breast height." In this case, there is no appreciable demand for a left-turn lane into the Winery due to lack of virtually any left turns into the Winery. However, strict application of the County's left-turn lane warrant would result in substantial environmental damage. **(Exhibit A; Exhibit C.)** This is precisely the type of situation that Napa County RSS, Section 3 is intended to prevent and that the General Plan urges the County to avoid to promote long-term environmental protection.

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**2. This Exception Request is Consistent with and in Furtherance of the County's Conservation Regulations, Which Contain Strong Protections in Favor of Preserving the County's Natural Resources and Avoiding Construction in Environmentally Sensitive Areas.**

Also closely related to Napa RSS, Section 3(d), are the County's Conservation Regulations, set forth in Chapter 18.108 of the Napa County Code ("County Code"). These regulations "apply to all zoning districts within Napa County and to all uses that may involve earthmoving activity." (County Code, § 18.108.020(A).) The definition of "[e]arthmoving or earth-disturbing activity" include any activity that involves vegetation clearing, grading, excavation, compaction of the soil, or the creation of fills and embankments to prepare a site for the construction of roads," all of which would be required to install a left-turn lane into the Winery. (*Id.* at § 18.108.030.)<sup>4</sup>

The purpose of the Conservation Regulations is to "preserve the natural resources" of the County, with an emphasis on protecting resources such as forests and wildlife habitat. (*Id.* at § 18.108.010(A).) The Conservation Regulations are intended to accomplish specific purposes, including the following:

1. Minimize cut, fill, earthmoving, grading operations and other such man-made effects in the natural terrain;
2. Minimize soil erosion caused by human modifications to the natural terrain;
3. Encourage development which minimizes impacts on existing land forms, avoids steep slopes, and preserves existing vegetation and unique geologic features; and

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<sup>4</sup> / "Grading" is further defined as "any stripping, cutting, filling, contouring, recontouring or stockpiling of earth or land, including the land in its cut or fill condition." (*Id.* at § 18.108.030.) As demonstrated below in in **Exhibit A**, road widening activities necessary to install a left-turn lane would grade substantial portions of two cut slopes immediately adjacent to the existing roadway shoulder on the western side of Deer Park Road.

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4. Reduce the loss of vegetation by increasing protections for vegetation canopy cover, requiring minimum mitigation requirements and prioritizing areas eligible for mitigation.

(*Id.* at § 18.180.010(B).)

The Winery and relevant segments of Deer Park Road are located in the Agriculture Watershed and Open Space (“AW” or “AWOS”) zoning district, which is subject to heightened environmental restrictions. In the AW district, “a minimum of seventy percent vegetation canopy cover as configured on the parcel existing on June 16, 2016 shall be maintained as part of any use involving earth-disturbing activity.” (*Id.* at § 18.108.020(C).)<sup>5</sup> County Code section 18.108.020(D) also sets forth detailed mitigation requirements regarding “the removal of any vegetation canopy cover” in the AW zoning district, with a preference to replace or preserve vegetation on-site. While intended to protect oak woodlands on privately owned lands, these requirements underscore the County’s preference to avoid unnecessary vegetation removal – a basis for this exception request.<sup>6</sup>

The Conservation Regulations also restrict earthmoving activities in erosion hazard areas, which are defined as portions of land “having slopes over

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<sup>5</sup> / “Vegetation canopy cover” includes “oak woodland . . . based on the current Manual of California Vegetation (MCV) and as described in the Napa County Baseline Data Report (2005 or as amended).” (County Code, § 18.108.030.) The Biological Analysis determined that the “trees on the west side of Deer Park Road are clearly considered to be part of an ‘oak woodland’ . . . [b]ased on the California Oak Woodlands Conservation Act of 2004 and the Manual for California Vegetation’s minimum canopy requirements.” (**Exhibit C**, p. 6.) The Napa County General Plan EIR also identifies the relevant portion of Deer Park as within the oak woodland biotic community. (General Plan Draft EIR (2007), Figure 4.5-1.)

<sup>6</sup> / As illustrated in **Exhibit A**, the road widening activities required to construct a left-turn lane into the Winery would primarily not occur on privately owned parcels. However, under “Option 1,” road widening activities would occur beyond an existing fence and onto private property at Cut Slope 1 and remove one (1) heritage oak tree and irreversibly damage another large Coast Live Oak (17” DBH) on the other side of the fence. (**Exhibit C**, p. 5.)

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five percent.” (County Code, § 18.108.030.) Here, the two cut slopes that would be graded to accommodate a left-turn lane are essentially vertical and have slopes well over five percent. (**Exhibit A**, Attachment One, pp. 3-11.) “Whenever a *project within an erosion hazard area*” requires grading permits or other discretionary permits, the permit shall be subject to various conditions, including:

1. Existing vegetation shall be preserved to the maximum extent consistent with the project. Vegetation shall not be removed if it is identified as being necessary for erosion control in the approved erosion control plan . . . .
2. **Existing trees six inches in diameter or larger, measured at diameter breast height, (DBH), or tree stands of trees six inches in diameter (DBH)** or larger located on a site for which either an administrative or discretionary permit is required shall not be removed until the required permits have been approved by the decision-making body and tree removal has been specifically authorized.
3. Wherever removal of vegetation is necessitated or authorized, the director or designee may require the planting of replacement vegetation of an equivalent kind, quality and quantity.
4. All graded areas for nonagricultural activities shall be replanted with permanent vegetation.

(County Code, § 18.108.100 [emphasis added].)

As stated above, section 18.108.100 is triggered “[w]henver a *project*” is located “*within an erosion hazard area*” requires grading, erosion control, or similar permits. (Italics added.) This regulatory scope demonstrates that section 18.108.100 is primarily intended to apply to projects on privately owned lands that would impact vegetation within erosion hazard areas – not to the County’s conditions of approval that require public roadway improvements under Napa County RSS. The conditions provided in section 18.108.100 that require “replacement vegetation of an equivalent kind, quality and quantity” pursuant to a “revegetation plan” reflect the high degree of control over property associated with legal possession. (*Id.* at § 18.108.100(D), (F).) Due to material differences in control and infrastructure (e.g., irrigation), public roadsides cannot be

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revegetated in the same manner as private property – especially when it comes to native oak species that take decades to become established.

Here, installation of a left-turn lane is *not* a component of the Winery’s use permit modification project. Unless this exception request is granted, construction of a left-turn lane would be required by the County as a condition of approval based on the County’s left-turn lane warrant. In this case, the County’s proposed conditions of approval would result in adverse environmental impacts to vegetated erosion hazard areas along the public roadside. Exceptions to the Napa County RSS exist precisely to prevent this type of unintended and environmentally harmful situation. The connection between Napa County RSS and the Conservation Regulations is clear. For example, County Code section 18.108.100 requires protection existing vegetation to the maximum extent, with additional protections for “[e]xisting trees six inches in diameter or larger, measured at diameter breast height, (DHB).” (County Code, § 18.108.100(A), (B).) Under Napa County RSS, Section 3(d)(i) an exception may be granted to preserve unique features of the natural environment, including heritage oak trees or other trees of at least 6 inches DBH.<sup>7</sup>

### **III. Under Existing Conditions, There Are Numerous Constraints That Justify the Exception Request.**

Deer Park Road is a “two-lane rural collector street.” (Traffic Study, p. 4.) The Winery is located on the eastern side of Deer Park Road, which consists of one 12-foot northbound lane. The Winery’s entrance is approximately 25 feet south of (i.e., offset from) the intersection with Sanitarium Road; vehicles on Sanitarium Road must veer to the right to enter the Winery. (**Exhibit A**, Option 1, Sheet 1.) As such, while the Winery is safely accessible from Sanitarium Road,

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<sup>7</sup> / As discussed above, these protections for oak and other native trees are consistent with those provided by neighboring and similar jurisdictions. In Sonoma County, a permit is required to remove “[p]rotected trees greater than six inches (6”) diameter at breast height (d.b.h.),” with all native oak and pine trees deemed “protected trees.” (Sonoma County Municipal Code, §§ 26-04-020 26-88-015(A)(5)(a)(1).) In the City of Napa, valley oaks, live oaks, and black oaks 12 inches DBH or greater are deemed protected native trees. (City of Napa Municipal Code, § 12.45.020.) As documented in **Exhibit C**, installation of a left-turn lane would require numerous oaks 12 inches DBH or greater to be cut down and should be preserved.

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the intersection between Sanitarium and Deer Park Road is narrow with irregular (i.e., not perpendicular) intersection geometrics. (*Ibid.*; **Exhibit B**, pp. 3-4; 2018 Traffic Study, p. 23.) 75 percent of trips into the Winery occur to/from the south on Deer Park Road (i.e., right turns into the Winery). (**Exhibit B**, p. 2.) The remaining 25 percent of trips into the Winery occur to/from the west on Sanitarium Road. (*Ibid.*) Left turns into the Winery are so infrequent that there is no appreciable volume of such trips: “Unless winery guests actually live in the vicinity of White Cottage Road and/or the Angwin area, 100% of guest visitation originates through the Napa Valley via Deer Park Road and Sanitarium Road.” (*Ibid.*)

Under existing conditions, Deer Park Road has a narrow 1-foot shoulder on both sides of the road in the vicinity of the Winery. On the Winery’s side, protected oak trees, substantial utilities, and the Winery’s historic stone mailbox are all immediately adjacent to the roadway. (**Exhibit A**, Option 2.) The Winery’s gate, which largely consists of a historic stone wall, is approximately 32 feet from the end of pavement on Deer Park Road.<sup>8</sup> In sum, under existing conditions the relevant portions of Deer Park Road are narrow, with no room for expansion at the intersection with Sanitarium Road without substantially altering the existing area and causing multiple adverse and significant environmental impacts.

On the opposite (i.e., western) side of Deer Park Road, there are currently two southbound lanes north of (i.e., before) the intersection with Sanitarium Road and the Winery’s entrance: (1) a 11-foot southbound lane for through traffic on Deer Park Road; and (2) a 12-foot right-turn lane from Deer Park Road to Sanitarium Road. (*Ibid.*) In terms of roadway alignment, this southbound right-turn lane stands out on its own. If this lane were extended southbound along Deer Park Road – *which would be required to install a left-turn lane* – then it

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<sup>8</sup> / Under Napa County RSS, D-11, the Winery’s gated entrance must be set back at least 30’ from the end of pavement of Deer Park Road. In other words, if Deer Park Road were widened by more than 2’, then the Winery’s gate and its historic stone wall would have to be relocated accordingly. As demonstrated in **Exhibit A**, Option 2, widening to the east on Deer Park Road would require widening by approximately 6’ feet in front of the Winery’s entrance, which would require the Winery’s gate and stone wall to be placed 4’ behind their current location. This would require dismantling all of the Winery’s historic stone wall, which was constructed in the 1920s.

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would occupy portions of the existing roadside, which include two (2) rocky cut slopes with 17 protected trees that would be cut down or irreversibly damaged. (*Ibid.*; **Exhibit C**, pp. 5-6.) On the western side, the paved shoulder immediately abuts the cut slopes and their sensitive environmental resources. (**Exhibit A.**) In terms of utilities, an active HMMWC water line runs along these cut slopes and is located in the subject construction area.

#### **IV. Developing a Left-Turn Lane Would Require Substantial Road Widening and Construction.**

As illustrated in **Exhibit A**, a left-turn lane from Deer Park Road into the Winery could be installed under two scenarios: (1) widening to the west (“Option 1”); or (2) widening to the east and west (“Option 2”). Implementation of either option would require substantial road widening that would result in adverse impacts. There are not any feasible alternatives that would substantially lessen or avoid these impacts.<sup>9</sup>

**Option 1** represents an approach to utilize the existing lane configuration on Deer Park Road to the greatest extent feasible by constructing an entirely new lane to the west. Specifically:

1. A new 11-foot lane would be constructed upon the western shoulder of Deer Park Road, which would become the right-turn lane onto Sanitarium Road;
2. The existing 12-foot right-turn lane from Deer Park Road to Sanitarium Road would become the southbound lane for through traffic on Deer Park Road; and
3. The existing 11-foot southbound lane on Deer Park Road would become the left-turn lane into the Winery.

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<sup>9</sup> / Due to the existing roadway alignment, a substantial amount of widening to the west would be required to install a new left-turn lane. (**Exhibit A.**) As illustrated in **Exhibit A**, any alternative widening scenarios would result in similar if not more significant impacts. For example, as illustrated by “Option 2,” increasing widening to the east would cut down additional trees on the eastern roadside, complicate relocation of the impacted utilities, and would result in inadequate setbacks between the Winery’s property and the roadway.

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As illustrated in **Exhibit A**, Option 1, the existing northbound lane on Deer Park Road would remain in its current condition, with all construction impacts occurring west of the yellow dividing line between the northbound and southbound lanes. This construction would require substantial widening both before and after the intersection of Deer Park Road and Sanitarium Road. To repurpose the existing right-turn lane as the southbound lane for through traffic, this lane must be extended to continue past the intersection with Sanitarium Road. (**Exhibit A**, Option 1.) Immediately south of the intersection with Sanitarium Road, *the southbound lane* (*cf.* total widening) on Deer Park Road would initially be widened by up to 9 feet from the existing paved shoulder, gradually tapering down to the existing southbound lane after 500 feet. (**Exhibit A**, Option 1, Sheets 1 and 2.)

**The influence of topography:** However, substantially more widening would be required due to the presence of nearly vertical cut slopes immediately adjacent to the existing 1-foot shoulder on the existing southbound lane south of the intersection with Sanitarium Road. (**Exhibit A**.) Specifically, to safely widen the road to include this steep topography, four (4) separate 2:1 cuts would be required to stabilize these slopes. (**Exhibit A**, Option 1; see footnote 1, *supra*, regarding the effect of widening steep slopes and the 2:1 cuts that would be required.) **Extending laterally from the existing roadway shoulder, the greatest of these 2:1 cuts would require approximately 10-foot of cut into the existing cut slope, which would require 20 feet of grading.** (*Ibid.*) As discussed below, in addition to other significant impacts, this substantial construction would require numerous protected trees of significant importance, including heritage oak trees, to be cut down.

**Option 2** would achieve the same lane configuration as Option 1 but would involve widening to the east and west. (**Exhibit A**.) With respect to widening to the west, Option 2 would result in substantially similar impacts as Option 1. As in Option 1, widening the existing cut slopes would require four (4) separate 2:1 cuts, the largest of which would require 10 feet of lateral cut and 20 feet of lateral grading. (**Exhibit A**.) As discussed below, on the western side of Deer Park Road, Options 1 and 2 would result in substantially similar impacts. For example, the same heritage oak trees and other protected trees of significant importance would be cut down. (**Exhibit A**; **Exhibit C**, pp. 4-6.) Regarding widening to the east, Option 2 would cause further environmental impacts and be subject to material constraints. As such, Option 2 generally would result in more adverse impacts and be subject to more constraints compared to Option 1.

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**V. Construction of a Left-Turn Lane Would Have Multiple and Far-Reaching Adverse Impacts That Should Be Avoided.**

The significant and adverse impacts associated with installation of a left-turn lane are summarized in detail at pages 2 through 4 of this letter. The following discussion demonstrates precisely why these unavoidable impacts would occur and why each ground set forth in Napa County RSS, Section 3(d) is met.

**A. Under Option 1, Widening to the West Would Cut Down Numerous Heritage Oaks and Protected Trees, Grade Natural Rock Formations, Threaten A Major Water Line, and Impact Third Party Property Rights, All of Which Should Be Avoided.**

Construction of a left-turn lane from Deer Park Road into the Winery under Option 1 (widening to the west) would result in the following impacts and be affected by the following constraints. These significant environmental impacts should be avoided by granting this exception request.

**1. Widening to the West Would Result in Significant and Unavoidable Environmental Impacts That Should Be Avoided and Would Be Subject to Material Environmental Constraints That Should Be Accommodated.**

Widening to the west would result in significant adverse environmental impacts on two nearly vertical cut slopes. Without limitation, the substantial construction required to develop a left-turn lane would remove or irreversibly damage a total of 18 protected trees that are part of a contiguous oak woodland and should be preserved. (**Exhibit C**, pp. 1-6.)

**a. Impacts to Cut Slope No. 1: Ten (10) Protected Trees of Significant Importance, Including Four (4) Heritage Coast Live Oak Trees Would Be Removed and Steep, Natural Rock Formations Would be Graded.**

Just south of the intersection with Sanitarium Drive, a rocky cut slope comprised of solid, natural geologic formations is immediately adjacent to the

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roadway shoulder (“Cut Slope No. 1”). (**Exhibit A**, Option 1; *id.* at Attachment One, pp. 3, 5-7.) As illustrated in **Exhibit A**, construction of a left-turn lane under Option 1 would require virtually all of Cut Slope No. 1 would be graded. (*Ibid.*) **Roadway construction and grading of Cut Slope No. 1 would remove 10 protected trees of significant importance with a DBH well over 6 inches, including three heritage Coast Live Oaks, with diameters of 18.5”, 24.2”, 35”, and 38.6”**, respectively. (**Exhibit C**, pp. 4-6.) An additional 17” DBH Coast Live Oak would be irreversibly damaged due to severe limbing and/or root system impacts. (*Id.* at pp. 5-6.) In total, 11 protected trees of significant importance would be impacted. As documented in the Biological Analysis, these trees are “clearly considered to be part of an ‘oak woodland’” and have substantial habitat benefits. (*Id.* at pp. 1-6.) These native trees, primarily oaks, which took decades to become established, also provide visual screening to the property abutting Cut Slope No.1, and aesthetic value by forming a corridor of trees along Deer Park Road. They also stabilize the cut slope. Each of these trees is significant and should be preserved by granting this exception request. (Napa County RSS, Section 3(d)(i).)

Beyond the oak woodland it supports, Cut Slope No. 1 itself requires protection. Its solid, natural rock formations, characteristic of the Howell Mountain area are not only steep slopes but are unique geological features that should not be graded. (Napa County RSS, Section 3(d)(i).) Additionally, these steep, solid rock formations are “physical site limitations such as grade differentials” that should be accommodated through this exception request. (Napa County RSS, Section 3(d)(ii).)

**b. Impacts to Cut Slope No. 2: Four (4) Protected Trees of Significant Importance Would Be Removed or Irreversibly Damaged and Steep, Natural Rock Formations Would be Graded.**

Further down Deer Park Road, immediately south of an existing private driveway (which would also be impacted as discussed below), is a second nearly vertical cut slope that, like Cut Slope No. 1, is also forested and composed of solid rock formations (“Cut Slope No. 2). (**Exhibit A**, Option 1, Sheet 2; *id.* at Attachment One, pp. 11-12.) Cut Slope No. 2 is also located immediately adjacent to the existing 1-foot shoulder and would be impacted by virtually any widening to the west. As illustrated in **Exhibit A**, a 2:1 cut that would extend up

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to 10 lateral feet from the existing shoulder would be required to accommodate a left-turn lane. This construction would cut down two (2) protected Coast Live Oak trees, that measure 15.2" and 14.9" DBH, respectively. (**Exhibit C**, p. 5.) Two additional Coast Live Oak measuring 14" and 6" DBH, respectively, would be irreversibly damaged due to serve limbing and/or root system impacts. (*Ibid.*) As documented in the Biological Analysis, each of these four (4) protected trees that would be impacted are of significant importance due to their location on the edge of an oak woodland and their substantial habitat benefits. (*Id.* at pp. 1-6.) The natural rock formations of Cut Slope No. 2 are also unique geologic features of the natural environment and should be preserved and accommodated. (Napa County RSS, Section 3(d)(i)-(ii).) Therefore, the County should grant this exception request to preserve these "unique features of the natural environment" that cannot be replaced and are significant to the quality of the area's environment. (Napa County RSS, Section 3(d)(i).)

## **2. Widening to the West Would Be Subject to Material Physical Site Limitations and Legal Constraints, Which Should Be Accommodated Through this Exception Request.**

As discussed above, the narrow roadway shoulder, its location immediately adjacent to solid rock formations and protected trees, and the existing roadway geometry are all physical site limitations that materially constrain the ability to construct a left-turn lane. Due to the protected nature of these natural resources, this exception request is necessary to accommodate these physical site limitations and preserve these features. However, there are additional physical site limitations and constraints that must be recognized. First, an active HMMWC water line runs along the top of the cut slopes. (**Exhibit A; Exhibit C**, p. 3.) On Cut Slope No. 1, this water line would be within the construction area. (**Exhibit A**, Option 1.) This construction activity would unreasonably jeopardize HMMWC's essential water facilities and require their relocation. Major construction activities should occur here. This exception request is necessary to protect HMMWC's public water supply and public health.

Second, construction of a left-turn lane would adversely impact private property under Option 1. First, the construction area on Cut Slope No. 1 would extend several feet beyond an existing fence onto private property where (**Exhibit A**, Option 1.) Protected trees on this private property would also be impacted, including removal of a heritage Coast Live Oak measuring 35" DBH, removal of a Blue Oak measuring 10" DBH, and irreversible damage to a Coast

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Live Oak measuring 17" DBH (44" DBH cumulatively). (**Exhibit C**, p. 5.) Additionally, construction of a left-turn lane would require the roadway to be widened at a private driveway to which neither the Winery nor the County have property rights. Specifically, the roadway would be widened by approximately 4 feet at the northern side of the driveway and 2 feet at the southern side of the driveway, respectively. In addition to permanently taking a portion of this private driveway, we understand that the Winery generally lacks access to construct a left-turn lane and would require several easements outside of the public right of way. (Napa County RSS, Section 3(d)(iii).)

**B. Under Option 2, Widening to the East and West Would Generally Result in the Same Impacts as Under Option 1 and Also Impact the East Side of Deer Park Road by Cutting Down Additional Protected Trees, Relocating Major Public Utilities, and Adversely Impacting Historic Sites.**

Under Option 2, roadway widening along Deer Park Road would occur to the east and west on both sides of the intersection with Sanitarium Drive. North of the Winery's entrance, a left-turn lane into the Winery would be accommodated by: (1) widening the existing right-turn lane onto Sanitarium Drive by 6.5 feet to the west; and (2) widening the existing northbound lane by 6 feet to the east. (**Exhibit A**, Option 2.) This construction would result in the following adverse environmental impacts and would be subject to the following constraints, which should be accommodated by granting this exception request. (Napa County RSS, § 3(d)(i)-(iii).)

**1. As An Alternative to Widening to the West, Widening to the East and West of Deer Park Road Would Only Result in Additional Significant Adverse Environmental Impacts.**

**a. The Environmental Impacts Associated with Widening to the West Are Substantially Similar to Those That Would Occur Under Option 1.**

As discussed above, due to steep topography of the cut slopes on the western side of the road, the impacts associated with widening to the west under Option 1 and Option 2 are substantially similar. As documented in the Biological Analysis, all of the protected trees that would be removed or irreversibly

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damaged under Option 1 would be affected by the same impacts under Option 2. (**Exhibit C**, pp. 4-6.) Substantially similar portions of Cut Slope No. 1 and Cut Slope No. 2 would also be graded under the two options. For the reasons provided above, these are all “unique features of the natural environment” that warrant preservation under Napa County RSS, Section 3(d)(i)-(ii) and alone provide a sufficient basis upon which to grant this exception request.

**b. Widening to the East Would also Cut Down Several Protected Oak Trees and Grade a Steep Fill Slope.**

Along the existing northbound lane, there are multiple protected oak trees well over 6 inches DBH on both sides of the intersection between Deer Park Road and Sanitarium Road. (**Exhibit A**, Option 2, Sheets 1 and 2; *id.* at Attachment One, pp. 15-18.) North of the intersection and the Winery’s entrance, there are two established Blue Oak trees, measuring 14.1” and 17” DBH, respectively, that would be cut down. (**Exhibit C**, p. 5.) These native trees are unique features of the natural environment because they are the only trees on this stretch of the roadway, have taken decades to become established, and they provide environmental benefits such as habitat, aesthetic value, and erosion control. (**Exhibit A**, Option 2, Sheet 1; *id.* at Attachment One, pp. 15-18.) South of the Winery’s entrance, three (4) protected trees of significant importance would be impacted, including irreversible damage to a heritage Coast Live Oak and removal of two (2) additional established oaks. (**Exhibit C**, p. 5.) The trees south of the Winery’s entrance stabilize a fill slope (which would be graded) and contribute to the vegetative corridor and tree canopy on the western side of Deer Park Road. All of these trees should be protected. (Napa County RSS, Section 3(d)(i).)

**2. The Construction Required to Widen Deer Park Road to the East and West Would Be Subject to Material Physical Site Limitations and Legal Constraints.**

Under Option 2, the physical and limitations associated with widening to the west are substantially similar as those identified above regarding implementation of Option 1. The only difference is that under Option 2, construction on Cut Slope No. 1 would not extend beyond the existing fence line onto private property. However, protected oak trees on such private property would be subject to irreversible impacts under Option 2.

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Regarding the eastern side of Deer Park Road, there are additional material constraints that provide a further basis upon which to grant the Winery's exception request. (Napa County RSS, § 3(d)(ii)-(iii).) These constraints associated with widening to the east and the related impacts of such widening are set forth below.

**a. Major Public Utility Facilities Would Be Adversely Impacted.**

**i. Widening to the East Would Require Relocation of Electricity and Telecommunications Facilities.**

The Winery is located at a junction of local electricity and telecommunications facilities. (**Exhibit A**, Option 2; *id.* at Attachment One, pp. 15, 19-21.) At the northern side of the Winery's driveway along the east side of Deer Park Road are a distribution joint pole and two joint poles with telecommunications. The junction power pole serves properties on Deer Park Road and Sanitarium Road. As illustrated at **Exhibit A**, Attachment One at p. 20, the distribution joint pole is approximately 60 feet tall and conveys power and telecommunications services through approximately 20 individual wires. The distribution joint pole and an adjacent joint pole are located 11 feet from the existing roadway shoulder. To accommodate a left-turn lane, Deer Park Road would be widened by 6 feet from the existing shoulder. The required grading would alter the existing grade, impacting the distribution joint pole and the joint pole. Consequently, widening to the east would require relocation of the distribution joint pole and supporting guy lines (i.e., wires with yellow sheath supporting pole). These facilities would be relocated to the other (i.e., south) side of the Winery's driveway, which would require highly complicated construction and is likely not feasible. Specifically, to remain operational, the relocated lines would need to connect to the existing pole line on Sanitarium Road and stay linear with the existing pole line along Deer Park Road. Relocation of these facilities would be complex due to the pole being at the intersection of two lines. Moving the pole in any direction would require significant coordination with PG&E and other utility service providers. The potential to impact other poles on both lines would be high and would result in substantial service disruptions given its complicated and irregular nature. In sum, the distribution joint pole is a material constraint that is necessary to accommodate under Napa County RSS, Section 3(ii) by granting this request.

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**ii. Widening to the East Would Require Relocation of a Fire Hydrant.**

A fire hydrant and its protective bollards are located north of the Winery's gate within the construction area under Option 2. (**Exhibit A**, Option 2; *id.* at Attachment One, p. 22) Widening to the east would require relocation of this infrastructure.

**3. Widening to the East Would Adversely Impact Historic Sites and Be Subject to Legal Constraints.**

According to the Winery's records, the Winery's existing stone gate and mailbox were built by rock mason John Ballentin between 1922 and 1933.<sup>10</sup> The Winery's historic rock wall is part of the Winery's gated entrance. (**Exhibit A**, Attachment One, pp. 23-25.) The Winery's historic stone mailbox is located 9.5 feet from the existing roadway shoulder at the southern edge of the Winery's driveway. If Deer Park Road were widened to the east to accommodate a left-turn lane, then both of these historic sites would be dismantled and relocated. This would result in a loss of their historic qualities. (*Id.* at Section 3(d)(ii)-(iii).)

The historic stone mailbox is located in the within the construction area under Option 2 and would require relocation. (**Exhibit A**, Attachment One, p. 24.) Additionally, as illustrated in **Exhibit A**, widening to the east at the Winery's driveway would require its gated entrance to set back four (4) feet from its current location. Otherwise, gated entrance will not be setback at least 30 feet from the end of pavement of Deer Park Road as required by Napa County RSS, D-11. Relocating the Winery's gated entrance and associated historic stone wall would require dismantling all of the Winery's historic stone wall. These historic resources, which have lasted for 100 years, should be preserved in their original state. (Napa County RSS, Section 3(d)(iii).)

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<sup>10</sup> / The Winery is replete with history. The existing stone Winery building was built in 1891 by John and Jacob Sutter and was the original Sutter Home Winery & Distillery. The Winery's farmhouse, which currently serves as offices, was built in 1922 – around the same time as the historic rock wall connected to and supporting the Winery's front gate.

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**V. Due to the Lack of Left Turns Into the Winery, Maintaining the Existing Condition Without a Left-Turn Lane Is Equally Protective of Public Safety.**

The Traffic Study, Supplemental Traffic Analysis (**Exhibit B**), and the 2018 Traffic Study prepared by GDH demonstrate that the findings required by Napa County RSS Section 3(e) also can be made. Consideration was given to whether the addition of project trips to the Winery's driveway could exacerbate any existing safety issues if a left-turn lane were not provided. On this issue, the Traffic Study, based on peak period traffic counts, found that there are no appreciable southbound left-turn volumes on Deer Park Road at the Winery's driveway. (Traffic Study, p. 20; see also 2018 Traffic Study, pp. 22-23.) "Consequently, there would be virtually no demand for a southbound left-turn lane on Deer Park Road at the Bremer Family Winery north driveway." (Traffic Study, p. 20.) Without any demand for a left-turn lane into the Winery, installing such a lane would not have any practical benefits related to public safety. (Napa County RSS, § 3(e).)

The Supplemental Traffic Analysis further analyzes whether a left-turn lane would be required under widely accepted Caltrans and American Association of State Highway Engineers ("AASHTO") methodologies, which account for the actual volume of left-turn movements and traffic speeds to determine whether a left-turn lane is required for public safety. (**Exhibit B**, pp. 2-4.) The Supplemental Traffic Analysis concludes that a left-turn lane would not be required under the Caltrans or AAASHTO warrant analyses. (*Ibid.*; see also 2018 Traffic Study, pp. 21-22.) Consideration of the actual volume of left-turn movements and overall travel speeds "shows that due to the lack of left-turn movements into the Winery, the existing condition without a left-turn has essentially the same effect on safety as would be experienced with a turn lane." (*Id.* at p. 3.) As such, the requirements of Napa RSS, Section 3(e) are satisfied.

The Supplemental Traffic Study also found that "installation of a of southbound left-turn lane on Deer Park Road at the Bremer Family Winery North Driveway may result in adverse safety impacts by interfering with outbound turning movements from Sanitarium Road given existing intersection geometrics" (**Exhibit B**, p. 3.) This is because "[c]onverting the shoulder and substantial portions of the frontage along Deer Park Road would further constrain the tight intersection at Sanitarium Road." (*Ibid.*; see also 2018 Traffic Study, p. 23 [installation of a "southbound left-turn pocket would create major vehicle/safety

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conflicts with outbound motorists from Sanitarium Road wishing to turn left (north) onto Deer Park Road”].) Thus, with no appreciable demand for a left-turn lane, installation of a left-turn lane would likely have an overall negative impact on public safety by further constraining outbound turning movements from Sanitarium Road. (*ibid.*)

We greatly appreciate your time and consideration of this exception, which is necessary based on the information provided above, as well as sensible given the lack of traffic entering via a left turn. Should you require additional information in support of the Winery’s request or if we may be of further assistance in your review, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,

MATARAZZO LAW, APC



ANDREA A. MATARAZZO

AAM:jis  
Enclosures

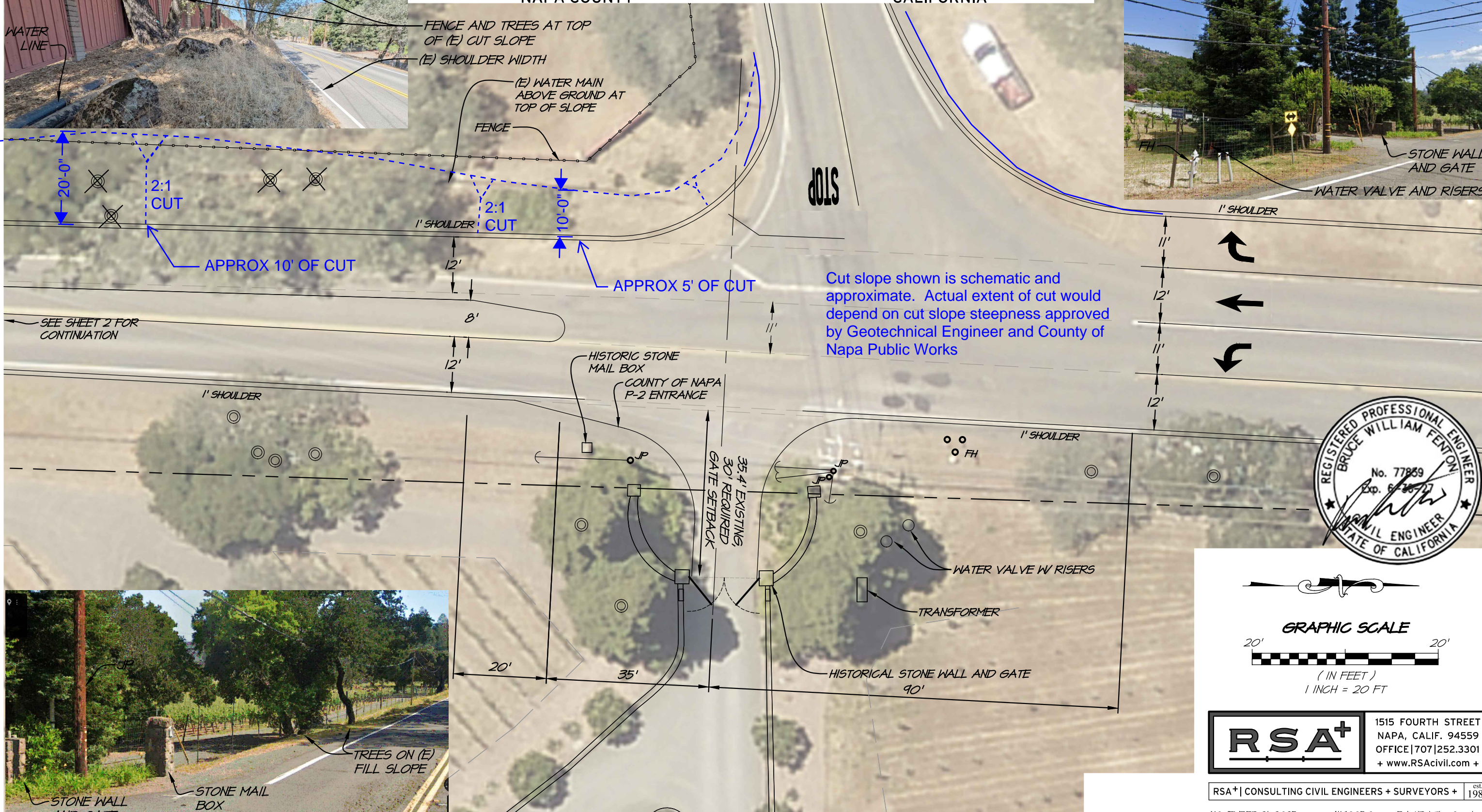
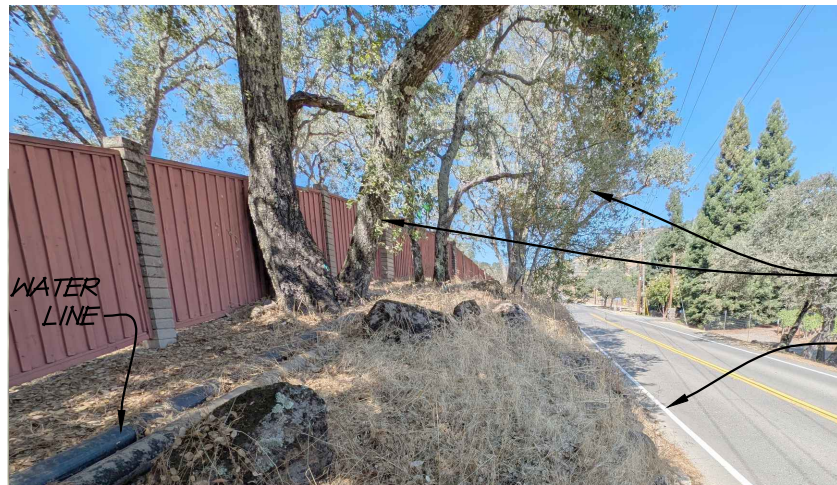
cc: Sean Trippi, Supervising Planner  
Laura Anderson, Deputy County Counsel

# EXHIBIT A

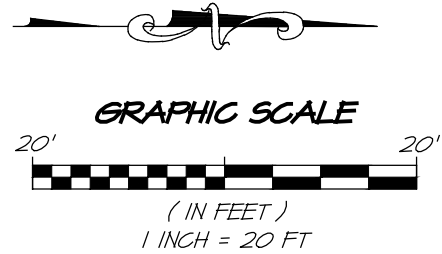
# BREMER FAMILY WINERY - OPTION 1 WIDENING TO WEST

## LEFT TURN CONSTRAINTS EXHIBIT

NAPA COUNTY CALIFORNIA



Cut slope shown is schematic and approximate. Actual extent of cut would depend on cut slope steepness approved by Geotechnical Engineer and County of Napa Public Works



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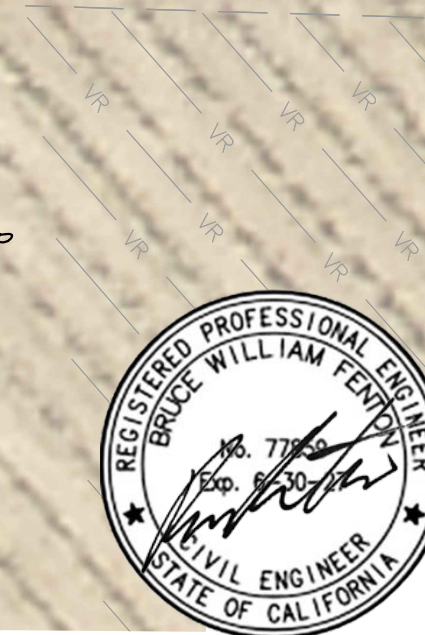
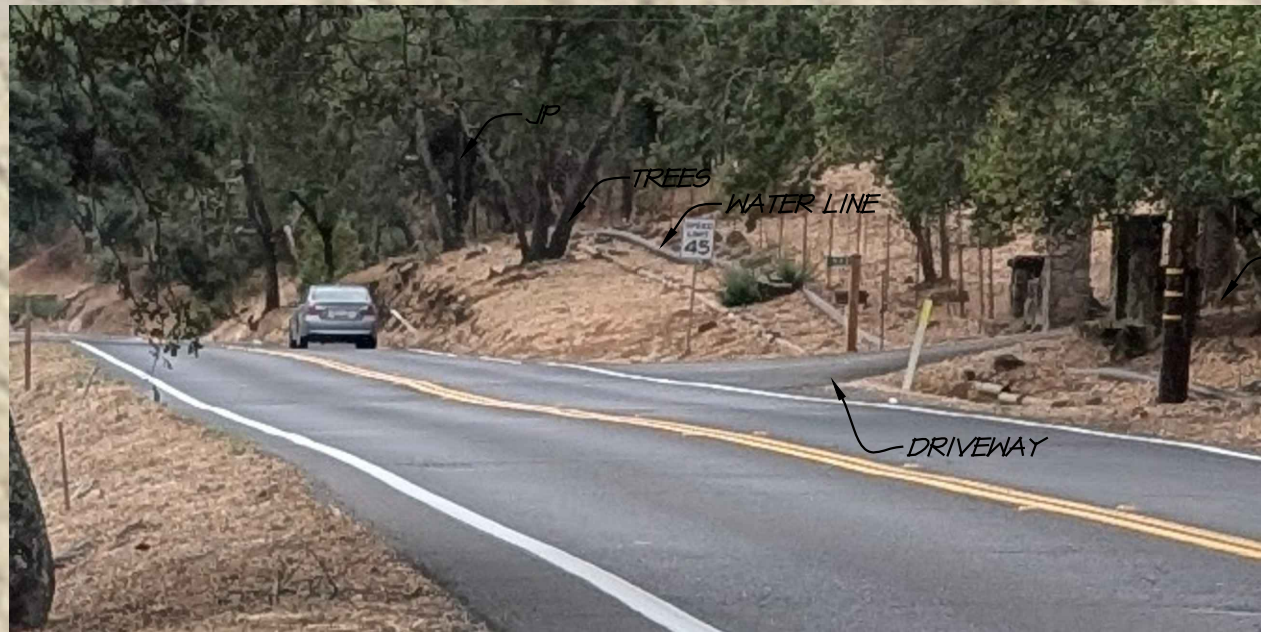
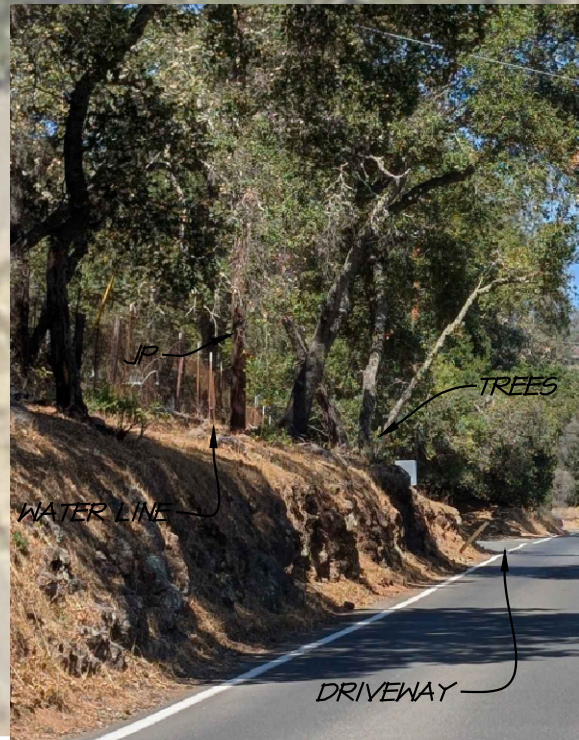


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# BREMER FAMILY WINERY - OPTION 1 WIDENING TO WEST

## LEFT TURN CONSTRAINTS EXHIBIT

NAPA COUNTY CALIFORNIA



**GRAPHIC SCALE**

20' 20'

( IN FEET )  
1 INCH = 20 FT

**SHEET 2 OF 2**

**RSA<sup>+</sup>**

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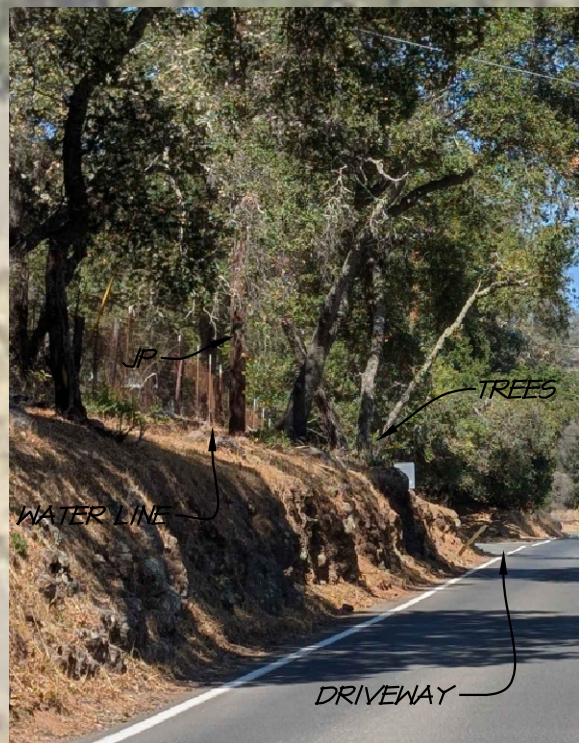
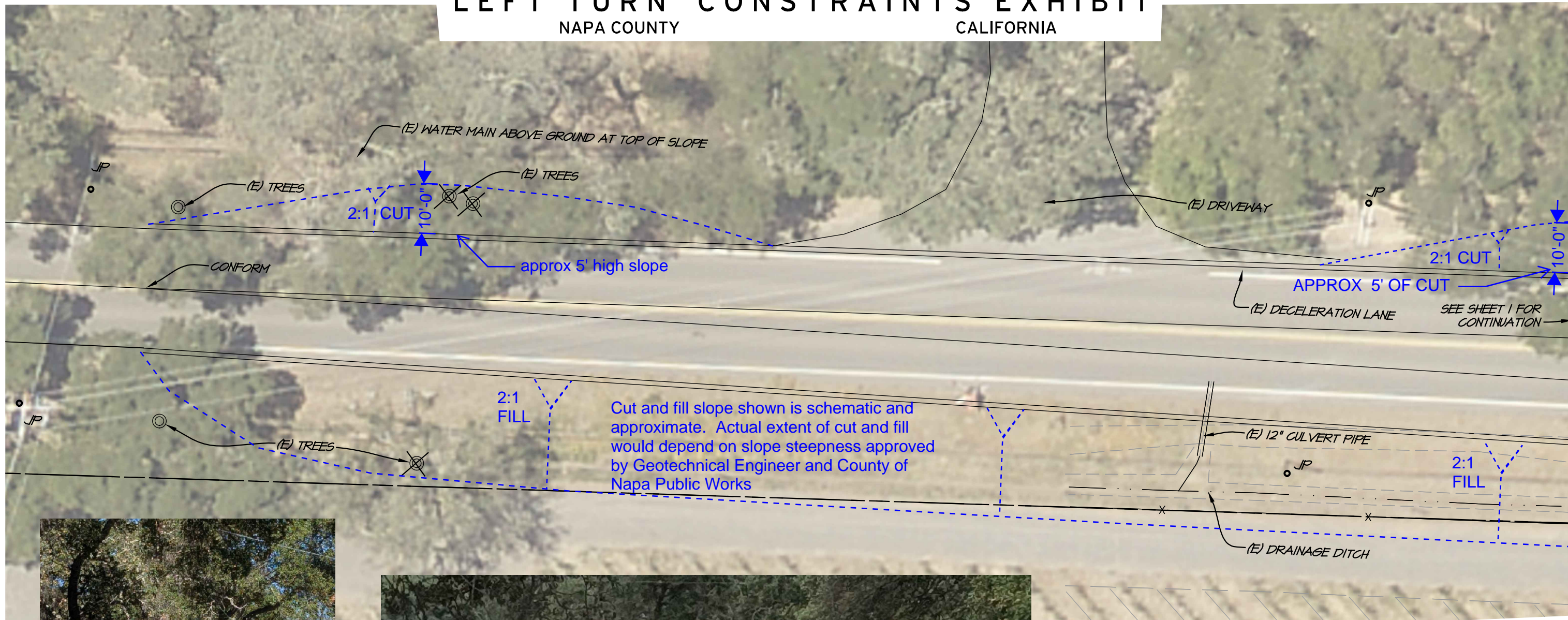
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# BREMER FAMILY WINERY - OPTION 2 WIDENING TO EAST AND WEST

## LEFT TURN CONSTRAINTS EXHIBIT

NAPA COUNTY CALIFORNIA



**GRAPHIC SCALE**

20' 20'

( IN FEET )  
1 INCH = 20 FT

SHEET 2 OF 2

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# Attachment 1

# EVIDENTIARY SOURCES

- **This ATTACHMENT ONE is based on photographic evidence taken by the Winery in September 2025.**
- **Consistent with personal knowledge of Winery's consultants based on their site visits.**
- **Illustrative of existing roadway conditions and constraints.**



# A Left Turn Lane Would:

## Impacts to West Side of Deer Park Road

- **Cut down or irreversibly damage 15 protected trees**
  - 4 heritage oaks
- **Destroy two (2) rocky cut slopes**
- **Threaten major water line**
- **Take neighboring private property**

## Impacts to East Side of Deer Park Road

- **Cut down or irreversibly damage 6 protected trees**
  - 1 heritage oak
- **Relocate and disrupt essential telecommunication facilities**
- **Require destruction of historic stone gate and mailbox**

# Constraints on West Side of Deer Park Road

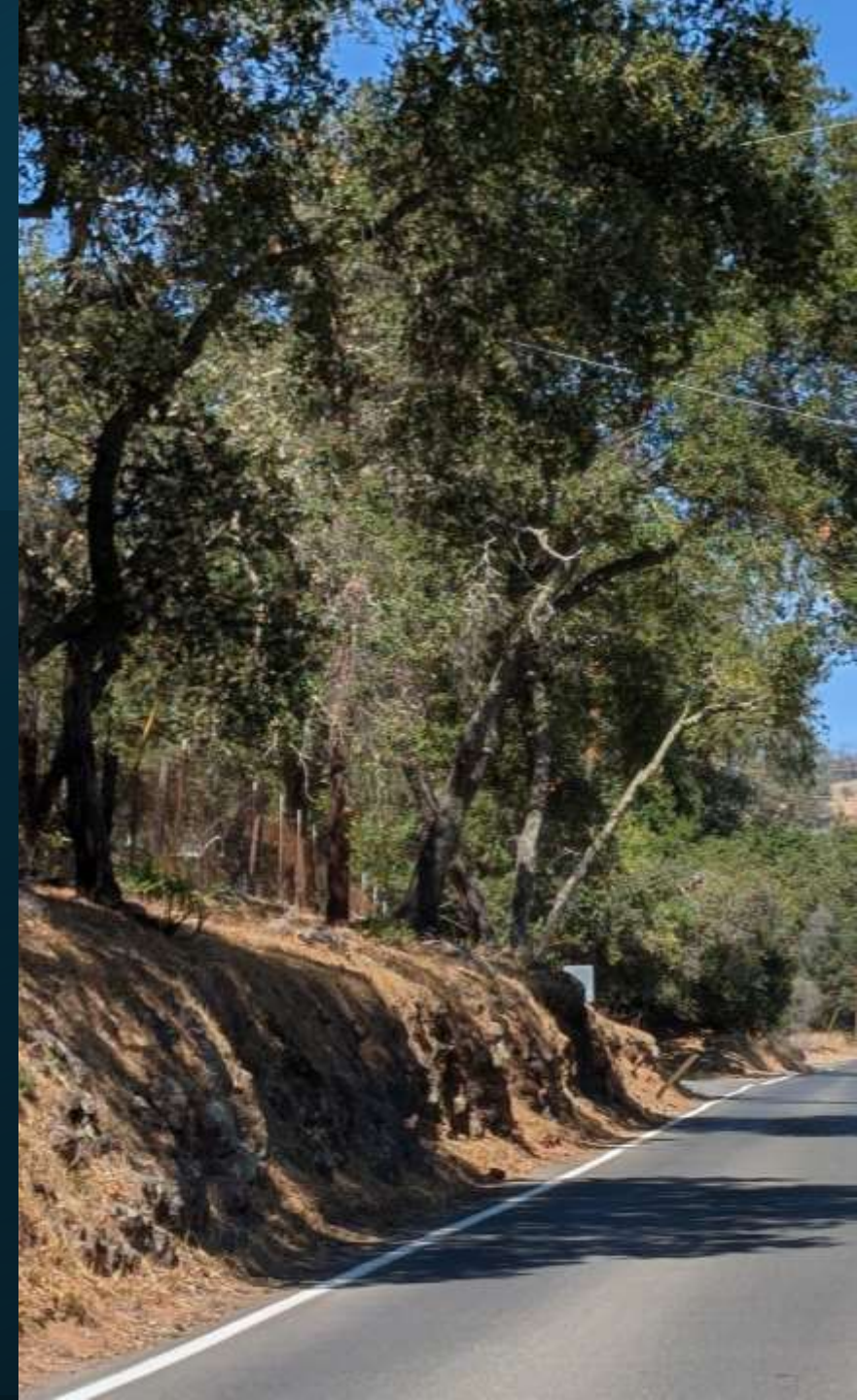
## SUMMARY:

- Virtually No Shoulder
- Grading of Two (2) Rocky Cut Slopes
- Removal/Irreversible Damage of 15 Protected Trees
- Endangerment of Critical Water Line



# Environmental Constraints: Protected Trees and Steep Slopes

- Along the western side of Deer Park Road south of the intersection with Sanitarium Road, installation of a left-turn lane would, require substantial road widening and grading on two nearly vertical cut slopes.
- This widening would cut down numerous protected trees and destroy steep slopes comprised of natural rock features



# **CUT SLOPE #1**

## **Protected Trees on Cut Slope Would be Destroyed**

- **Cut Slope #1 is located just south of intersection of Deer Park Road and Sanitarium Road**
- **Directly in alignment of existing right turn lane onto Sanitarium (see arrow in background)**
- **Adding a third lane to accommodate a left turn lane would require 10 feet of cut and up to 20 feet of lateral grading, which would result in significant adverse impacts**



# **CUT SLOPE #1 Protected Trees Would Be Cut Down**

---

- **The cut slope and all trees featured would be lost to install a left-turn lane into the Winery**
- **Four (4) heritage oak trees would be removed or irreversibly damaged**



# **CUT SLOPE #1 CONT'D**

**Minimal  
1-Foot  
Shoulder  
Abuts Rocky  
Cut Slope**



# **CUT SLOPE #1 CONT'D**

**Natural Rock  
Formation &  
Trees Should  
Be Preserved**

**To install a left-turn lane,  
the construction area  
would extend to (or  
beyond) the private fence  
featured (right)**

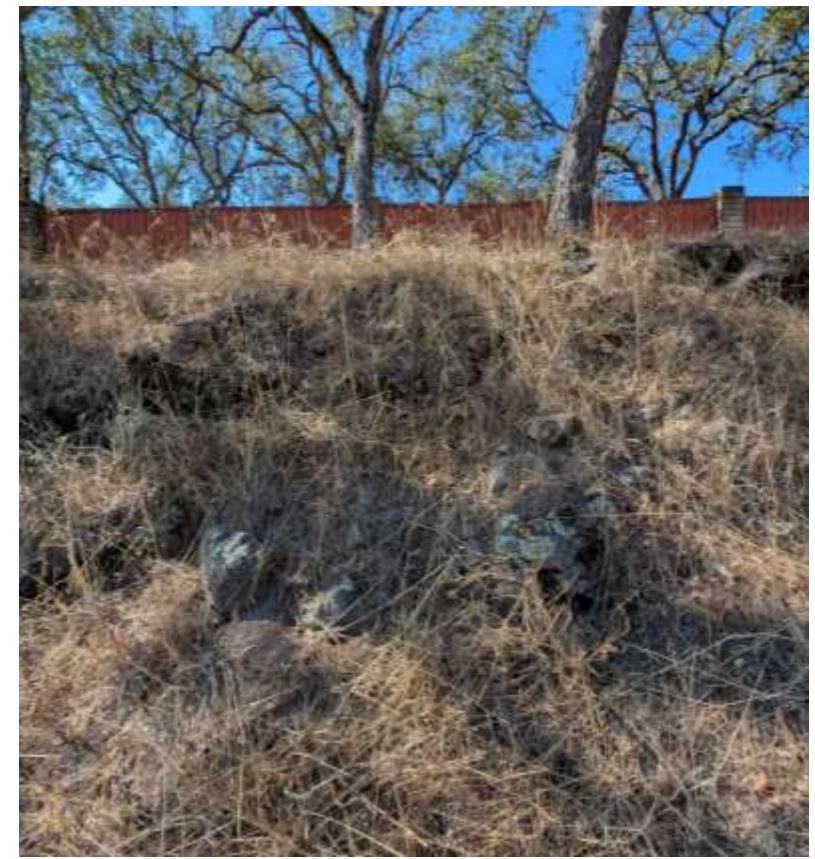




# Heritage Oak Tree at Edge of Cut Slope #1

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- Expert biologists determined that the numerous oak trees on Cut Slope No. 1 are part of an oak woodland and provide substantial habitat benefits
- These oak trees are large and of significant importance
- Three (3) heritage oaks, ranging up to 38.6” DBH would be cut down, with a fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) 35” DBH heritage oak irreversibly damaged
- These trees are virtually irreplaceable and must be preserved



**CUT SLOPE #1 CONT'D**  
**Mature Trees and Cut Slope Provide**  
**Visual Screening and Aesthetic Value**  
**and should be preserved**



## CUT SLOPE #2

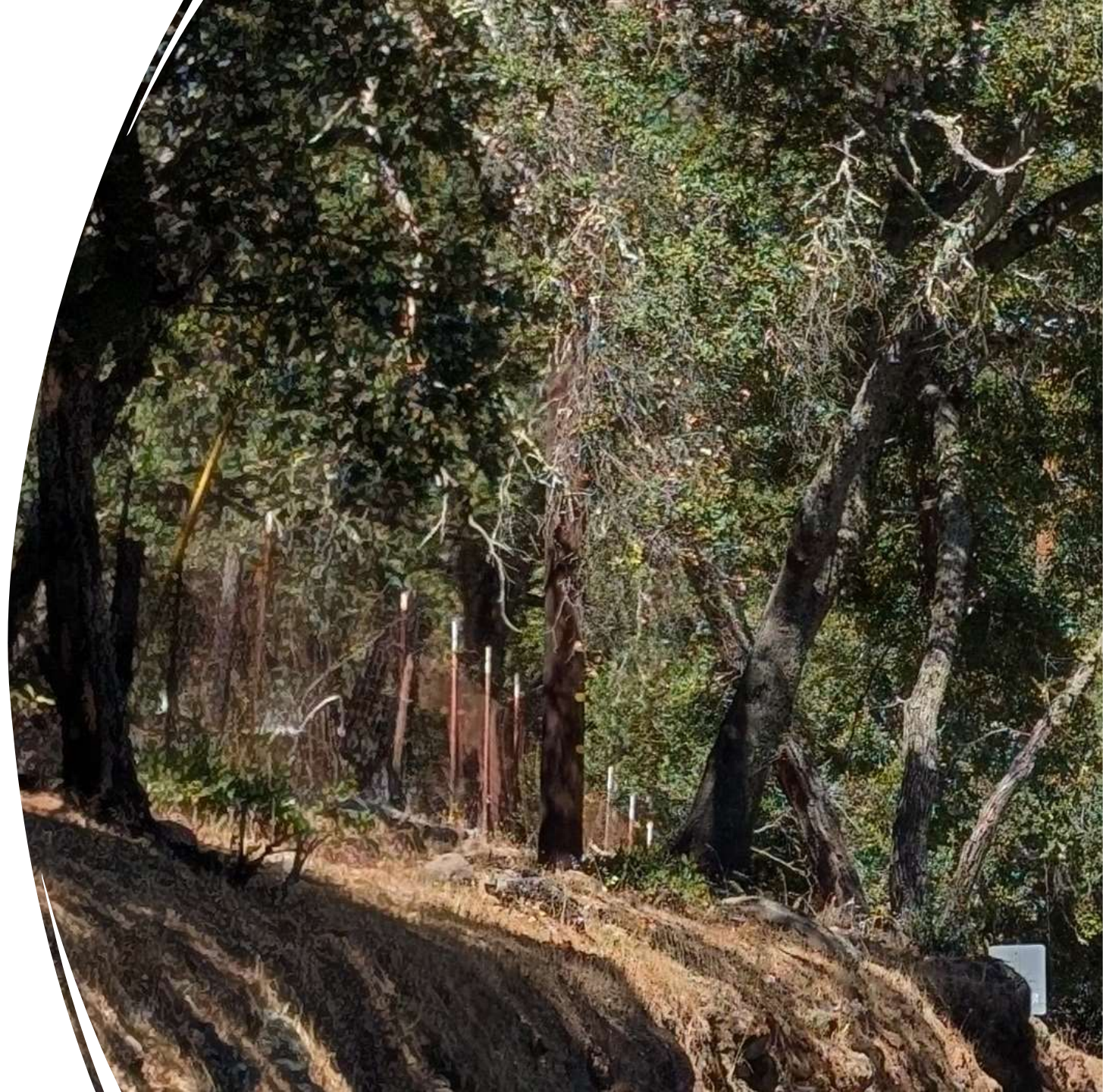
- Cut Slope #2 located just south of private driveway depicted in Constraints Exhibit
- Five (5) feet of cut and 10 feet of grading would be required at northern part of Cut Slope No. 2
- Would cut down two (2) protected trees, and irreversibly damage (2) protected trees

## **CUT SLOPE #2 CONT'D**

### **Protected Oaks Would Be Cut Down**

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- Protected oak trees at edge of Cut Slope #2 would be removed (see cluster of trees closest to power pole)
- Part of oak woodland and must be protected



# Physical Constraints on Western Side of Deer Park Road

- See parallel water lines (one is active)
- As noted, construction would go back to this fence



# **Destruction and Destabilization of Cut Slope Would Jeopardize HMMWC Water Lines**

- An active Howell Mountain Mutual Water Company (“HMMWC”) water line sits atop Cut Slopes #1 and #2
- The water line is in the construction area on Cut Slope #1
- Roadway construction here would threaten and disrupt HMMWC’s public water supply
- Heavy construction activity that would be required to widen Deer Park Road should not occur here





## Constraints on East Side of Deer Park Road

- Major utility facilities
- Protected oak trees
- Historic stone wall from 1920s

# Environmental Constraints on East Side of Deer Park Road: Protected Native Trees

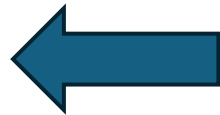
**Widening to East Would Cut Down Two (2) Protected Oaks North of Winery's Gate**



**Widening to East Would Cut Down or Irreversibly Damage Four (4) Protected Trees South of the Winery's Gate, Including a 35" DBH Heritage Coast Live Oak**



**NORTH**



**SOUTH**



# These Protected Trees Are Well Over 6-Inches DBH and Require Protection.



NOTE: All protected trees that would be removed or irreversibly damaged were mapped and measured by expert biologists

# Multiple Protected Trees of Significant Importance



- As confirmed by expert biologists, these trees are all well over 6” in diameter.
- These trees should be preserved.

# Physical Site Limitations on East Side of Deer Park Road: Major Public Utility Facilities

The Winery is at a junction of local electricity and telecommunications facilities.

Multiple power poles would require relocation.



**Road  
Widening to  
the East  
Would Impact  
Distribution  
Joint Pole**



# Road Widening to the East Would Impact Major Distribution Joint Pole and Provision of Essential Services

- Widening to the east would require relocation of distribution joint pole, guy lines on power pole, and joint pole with telecommunications
- Material constraint that would impact provision of essential telecommunication services.



# Fire Hydrant and its Bollards Would Require Relocation



**Fire hydrant located in construction area for road widening to the east.**



**Historic Stone Gate and Mailbox Would Be Impacted**





## Stone Gate and Mailbox from 1920s

- Road widening to east would require these historic resources to be dismantled
- These historic resources, which have lasted for 100 years, should be preserved in their original state



**Historic stone gate adjacent to impacted power poles**

- **Square pillars of gate would be located within the 30' setback required by Napa County RSS**

# CONCLUSION

- **The Winery's exception request should be granted because:**
  - **Over 21 protected trees would be cut down or irreversibly damaged, including five (5) heritage oak trees, four (4) of which would be cut down.**
  - **Cut slopes with natural rock features would be substantially destroyed**
  - **Major utilities, including a HMMWC water line and a distribution joint pole would be impacted**
  - **The roadway is limited by its narrow shoulder and numerous environmental, physical, and historic constraints in the roadside area required for construction**
  - **The existing condition is safe: Virtually zero left turns into the Winery**

# EXHIBIT B



# Memorandum

September 19, 2025

<b>To</b>	<b>John Bremer</b> , Owner/Applicant Bremer Family Winery	<b>Contact No.</b>	925 262-1903
<b>Copy to</b>	<b>Bruce Fenton</b> , PE, MBA, RSA <b>Byung Lee</b> , Senior Project Manager, PE, TE, GHD <b>Andrea Matarazzo</b> , Matarazzo Law, APC	<b>Email</b>	peter.galloway@ghd.com
<b>From</b>	<b>Peter Galloway</b> Senior Transportation Planner	<b>Project No.</b>	12593445
<b>Project Name</b>	Bremer Family Winery Use Modification (P22-00086)		
<b>Subject</b>	Left-Turn Lane Exception Request; Supplemental Analyses and Text/Discussion		

## Preface:

*The following left-turn lane warrant documentation and supplemental analysis is provided in support of the design exception request submitted for the proposed Bremer Family Winery Use Modification project. The left-turn lane information provided below is based on Napa County and Caltrans/AASHTO volume methodology. These analyses show that as there are virtually no left turns currently occurring or expected with the proposed permit modifications, the existing condition without a left-turn lane has essentially the same effect on safety as would be experienced with a turn lane. (Napa County Road and Street Standards, Section 3(e).) Previous left-turn lane analyses for other winery projects have also been reviewed and used for discussion purposes. The following sections outline the current report findings, left-turn lane warrant methodologies, and unique project characteristics that may preclude installation of a left-turn lane. Please use this information in support of the overall exception request.*

## Background:

With regard to the Bremer Family Winery Use Modification project, an exception request is being submitted for Napa County associated with the conditions of approval (COA) to install a southbound left-turn lane at the project’s primary driveway on Deer Park Road opposite Sanitarium Road.<sup>1</sup> The *Updated Traffic Study Report (TSR) Proposed Bremer Family Winery Use Modification Project*, dated August 12, 2025, evaluated the left-turn lane requirement based on County volume requirements and found that a left-turn lane would be required. However, the vast majority of proposed project trips would be to/from the Valley via Deer Park Road and/or Sanitarium Road and represent right-turn or through movements into the project driveway, not left-turn movements.

<sup>1</sup> Anna Vickroy, PE, TE, TJKM Consultants, Bremer Family Winery P22-00086) Conditions of Approval, Memorandum to PBES Staff, August 21, 2024.

This Technical Memorandum is provided under our agreement with the Bremer Family Winery. It is provided to foster discussion in relation to technical matters associated with the project.

## Napa County Methodology

The Napa County left-turn lane warrant is based on the requirements found in the *Napa County Road and Street Standards* (April 2023) as follows:

Left-Turn Lane Warrants: Use Permits or modifications thereof shall trigger the application of the following warrants to determine the necessity for a left-turn lane for the proposed use.

(a) Application of the Left-Turn Lane Warrant Graph based on road average daily traffic (ADT) and the projected ADT of the proposed use. The chart is a representation of probable conflict between turning traffic and advancing traffic. Private Road or Driveway ADT is the total average daily traffic utilizing the facility. A left-turn lane will not be considered for uses generating an ADT of 10 or less.

(b) If the corner sight distance in advancing direction, measured from the driveway, is less than required per Caltrans design standards (usually the posted speed limit multiplied by 11, read in feet) a left-turn lane shall be installed.

(c) If traffic conditions or turning movements pose a considerable threat to public safety, as determined by the Director of Public Works, a left-turn lane shall be installed.

The left-turn lane warrant evaluated for the project driveway was based on subtask (a) or average daily traffic (ADT) volumes generated at the proposed project driveway verses ADT volumes on Deer Park Road. Based on these Napa County ADT warrant graph criteria, a project would meet the left-turn lane warrant when the volumes fall above the plotted graph line on the chart. In the case of the proposed project, focused project ADT generated at the primary driveway would equal 108 daily trips with 3,295 daily trips on Deer Park Road and fall above the minimum ADT volumes for installation of a left-turn lane. However, virtually all proposed project trips are right-turn movements (westbound) from Deer Park Road or eastbound movements from Sanitarium Road. As noted in the updated TIS, project trips were distributed 75% to/from the south on Deer Park Road (i.e., right turn into the Winery) and 25% to/from the west on Sanitarium Road (i.e., straight into the Winery after stop sign at the intersection of Sanitarium and Deer Park Road). No project traffic volumes were assigned to/from the north on Deer Park Road, which is the only circumstance in which a left turn into the Winery could occur. Discussions with the project applicant indicate few if any visitation trips have been recorded coming to/from the north on Deer Park Road.<sup>2</sup> Unless winery guests actually live in the vicinity of White Cottage Road and/or the Angwin area, 100% of guest visitation originates through the Napa Valley via Deer Park Road and Sanitarium Road. The lack of left turns into the Winery is confirmed by actual traffic count data at the project driveway based on recent count date (Year 2023) and historical date (Year 2017) that indicate no project-generated traffic to/from the north.

### Caltrans/AASHTO Methodology:

Looking at other accepted left-turn warrant methodologies, there are two other sources that employ actual left-turn movements in evaluating the need for installation of a left-turn lane and these include the following references:

- **Caltrans**: *Guidelines for Reconstruction of Intersections* (1985);
- **American Association of State Highway Engineers (AASHTO)**, *Policy on the Geometric Design of Highways and Streets* (2018)

The Caltrans reference utilizes the long-established “Hammerlink” left-turn lane graphs that employ the advancing roadway volumes and left-turn lane percentage verses the opposing roadway volumes. More recent AASHTO volume graphs employ a similar methodology with corresponding speed increments for the roadway segment. Both methodologies evaluate the “peak hour” intersection turning movement volume at the subject

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<sup>2</sup> Mr. John Bremer, Bremer Family Winery, personal communications, Guest visitation patterns, August 15, 2017 and July 1, 2025.

intersection including the actual left-turn volume turning into the minor street or driveway and are categorized as “volume warrants for left-turn lanes at unsignalized grade intersections.” These detailed left-turn lane warrants are typically used on two-lane roadway and highway segments where left-turn movements can impede through-traffic and/or create safety issues related to rear-end collisions. Dependent on the overall volume of left-turn movements (as a percentage of the through-movements), a left-turn lane could be warranted at an unsignalized intersection based on the amount of opposing traffic volumes.

The AASHTO left-turn lane warrant methodology, unlike the Napa County Left-Turn Lane warrant methodology, accounts for the volume of left-turn movements at the intersection and overall travel speeds on the roadway. The County left-turn warrant does not consider the amount of left-turn demand nor the vehicle speeds on the roadway, which are crucial factors in determining whether a left-turn lane is necessary to mitigate roadway safety issues. Consideration of these factors shows that due to the lack of left-turn movements into the Winery, the existing condition without a left-turn lane has essentially the same effect on safety as would be experienced with a turn lane. In fact, installation of southbound left-turn lane on Deer Park Road at the Bremer Family Winery North Driveway may result in adverse safety impacts by interfering with outbound turning movements from Sanitarium Road given existing intersection geometrics. As illustrated in the Constraints Exhibit prepared by RSA+ attached as **Exhibit A** to the Winery’s exception request, construction of a left-turn lane into the project driveway would require substantial roadway widening to the west and/or east to resolve roadway alignment issues. Converting the shoulder and substantial portions of the frontage along Deer Park Road would further constrain the tight intersection at Sanitarium Road.

### **AASHTO Warrant Analysis**

Using Existing plus Proposed project AM and PM peak hour intersection volumes, the left-turn lane warrant for the Bremer Family Winery Driveway/Sanitarium Road/Deer Park Road intersection was evaluated using the AASHTO methodology for installation of a left-turn lane. The left-turn lane warrant calculations assume at least 1 southbound left-turn movement at the project driveway. Under Existing plus Project conditions, the installation of a separate southbound left-turn lane at the Bremer Family Winery Driveway/Sanitarium Road/Deer Park Road intersection would not be warranted under AASHTO guidelines during either the Friday weekday PM peak or Saturday midday peak hours with 50 mph vehicle speeds on Deer Park Road. In addition, an opposing volume of 800 northbound peak hour vehicles would be required to meet the left-turn lane warrant.<sup>3</sup> Currently, opposing peak hour volumes on Deer Park Road at the Bremer Family Winery Driveway are currently 367 (weekday) and 225 (weekend)(see ASSHTO Warrant sheets-attached).<sup>4</sup>

### **Alternative Left-turn Lane Analyses with Average Daily Project Trip Generation and Two Driveways**

Existing plus Project volumes were compared with the Napa County guidelines for installing a southbound left-turn lane on Deer Park Road at the Bremer Family Winery north and south driveways.<sup>5</sup> Napa County left-turn lane warrants are based on the combination of total proposed project *average* daily trips at the driveway and overall *average* daily volumes on Deer Park Road as stated in the *Napa County Road and Street Standards*.

The proposed project would increase overall yearly visitation from 3,600 guests to 12,500 guests per year. Based on 12,500 visitors; visitation would average 34 guests per day over the course of the year. The average daily visitor total of 34 guests reflects the Winery’s true activities and acknowledges that it will rarely host the maximum daily total of 70 visitors given the changing seasons, location, and overall marketing of the Winery. Napa County daily trip generation ratios for full-time/part-time employees, daily visitors, and production/grape haul for the weekday (Friday—worst case) conditions have been used to calculate all winery-related activities. In addition to proposed Winery activities, there are two (2) on-site residences that would be served by the same

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<sup>3</sup> AASHTO Guide for Left-Turn Lanes on Two-Lane Highways is based on peak hour intersection volumes. The left-turn movements are categorized as a percentage (5, 10, 20, or 30 percent) of the overall “advancing” or southbound volumes on Deer Park Road. The “opposing” volumes are the northbound volumes on Deer Park Road.

<sup>4</sup> American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets, Guide for Left-Turn Lanes on Two-Lane Highways, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2018.

<sup>5</sup> Napa County Road and Street Standards, PBES, Chapter 17, Traffic Control Devices, Left-Turn Lane Graph, 2023.

project driveways at Deer Park Road. These residences include an existing farmhouse and a 1-bedroom second dwelling unit. Based on accepted Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) daily trip rates for single-family homes and Napa County guidelines, each residence would generate 10 daily trips. Total average daily trip generation for proposed project uses and on-site residences has been calculated in **Table 1**.

**Table 1 Average Daily Project Trip Generation**

Project Use Components	Friday	Daily Trip Generation Ratio (Napa County)	Component Daily Trips	Total Weekday Daily Trips
Daily Full-Time Employees	8	3.05 one-way trips/employee	FT employee daily trips:	24.4
Daily Part-Time Employees	2	1.90 one-way trips/employee	PT employee daily trips:	3.80
Daily Visitors <sup>1</sup>	34	2.8 visitors/vehicle x 2 one-way trips	Visitor daily trips:	26.2
Maximum Event	0	2.6 visitors/vehicle x 2 one-way trips	Event daily trips:	0
Gallons of Production	50000	0.000018 truck trips	Production daily trips:	0.90
Tons of Grape Haul	312.5	0.013889 truck trips	Grape haul daily trips:	4.30
Residences	2	10 trips/residence	Residential daily trips:	20.0
			<b>Total Weekday Trips</b>	<b>79.6</b>

Source: Napa County, PB&ES, Winery Trip Generation Sheet, Daily trip generation ratios, 2022.

1. Daily visitors based on proposed yearly visitation of 12,500 guests or 34 average visitors per day (12,500/365).

As shown in **Table 1**, the proposed project would be expected to generate 79.6 (or 80) daily trips during the weekday Friday period. The average daily trip total of 80 would equate to 40 daily trips (each) at the Deer Park Road north and south driveways. If two driveways are used under the County's warrant requirements, then combined with 3,295 ADT on Deer Park Road (Existing plus Project Conditions), a southbound left-turn lane would not be warranted on Deer Park Road at the north Sanitarium Road/Bremer Family Winery driveway nor at the proposed south Bremer Family Winery driveway based on County ADT warrant requirements (Left-Turn Lane Warrant Graph--attached).

### Summary/Conclusions

Based on accepted AASHTO guidelines for the installation of a left-turn that accounts for the lack of actual left-turn movements at the Winery's driveway as well as roadway segment speeds; a left-turn lane would not be warranted at the Bremer Family Winery Driveway/Sanitarium Road/Deer Park Road intersection. There is only one (1) left-turn movement projected southbound on Deer Park Road into the project site during the peak hour. As noted, all project trip generation would originate from the Napa Valley south of the project site via Deer Park Road and/or Sanitarium Road. There would be little or no demand for a southbound left-turn lane at the Bremer Family Winery North Driveway/Sanitarium Road/Deer Park Road intersection. In addition, installation of southbound left-turn lane on Deer Park Road at the Bremer Family Winery North Driveway may interfere with outbound turning movements from Sanitarium Road given existing intersection geometrics that create vehicle turning movement conflicts.

For informational purposes, using the Napa County left-turn lane warrant and the "average" daily project trip generation with two project driveways; installation of a left-turn lane would not be required at either the Bremer Family Winery North Driveway/Sanitarium Road/Deer Park Road intersection or Bremer Family Winery South Driveway/Deer Park Road intersection. This latter left-turn lane analysis assumes two project driveways (inbound north driveway & outbound south driveway) as shown in the proposed project site plan. It is noted that the proposed project's average daily trip generation total of 80 trips would never enter/exit one project driveway. There would be 40 daily trips inbound at the Bremer Family Winery North Driveway and 40 daily trips outbound at the Bremer Family Winery South Driveway (see Napa County Warrant Sheet—attached).

Bremer Family Winery: Main Driveway / Deer Park Road

Existing + Project, Weekday Friday PM Peak Hour

FRIDAY PM PEAK HOUR

Table 9-23 Guide for Left-Turn Lanes on Two-Lane Highways (10)

Metric					U.S. Customary				
Opposing Volume (veh/h)	Advancing Volume (veh/h)				Opposing Volume (veh/h)	Advancing Volume (veh/h)			
	5% Left Turns	10% Left Turns	20% Left Turns	30% Left Turns		5% Left Turns	10% Left Turns	20% Left Turns	30% Left Turns
<b>60-km/h Operating Speed</b>					<b>40-mph Operating Speed</b>				
800	330	240	180	160	800	330	240	180	160
600	410	305	225	200	600	410	305	225	200
400	510	380	275	245	400	510	380	275	245
200	640	470	350	305	200	640	470	350	305
100	720	515	390	340	100	720	515	390	340
<b>80-km/h Operating Speed</b>					<b>50-mph Operating Speed</b>				
800	280	210	165	135	800	280	210	165	135
600	350	260	195	170	600	350	260	195	170
400	430	320	240	210	400	430	320	240	210
200	550	400	300	270	200	550	400	300	270
100	615	445	335	295	100	615	445	335	295
<b>100-km/h Operating Speed</b>					<b>60-mph Operating Speed</b>				
800	230	170	125	115	800	230	170	125	115
600	290	210	160	140	600	290	210	160	140
400	365	270	200	175	400	365	270	200	175
200	450	330	250	215	200	450	330	250	215
100	505	370	275	240	100	505	370	275	240

367 opposing volume

271 advancing volume  
1 left turn / 271 = 1%

Left-turn Lane Warranted?: NO  
Advancing volume of 271 with 1% left turns, and opposing volume of 367, is below minimum threshold of 800 opposing vehicles.

SATURDAY MID-DAY PEAK HOUR

Table 9-23 Guide for Left-Turn Lanes on Two-Lane Highways (10)

Metric					U.S. Customary				
Opposing Volume (veh/h)	Advancing Volume (veh/h)				Opposing Volume (veh/h)	Advancing Volume (veh/h)			
	5% Left Turns	10% Left Turns	20% Left Turns	30% Left Turns		5% Left Turns	10% Left Turns	20% Left Turns	30% Left Turns
<b>60-km/h Operating Speed</b>					<b>40-mph Operating Speed</b>				
800	330	240	180	160	800	330	240	180	160
600	410	305	225	200	600	410	305	225	200
400	510	380	275	245	400	510	380	275	245
200	640	470	350	305	200	640	470	350	305
100	720	515	390	340	100	720	515	390	340
<b>80-km/h Operating Speed</b>					<b>50-mph Operating Speed</b>				
800	280	210	165	135	800	280	210	165	135
600	350	260	195	170	600	350	260	195	170
400	430	320	240	210	400	430	320	240	210
200	550	400	300	270	200	550	400	300	270
100	615	445	335	295	100	615	445	335	295
<b>100-km/h Operating Speed</b>					<b>60-mph Operating Speed</b>				
800	230	170	125	115	800	230	170	125	115
600	290	210	160	140	600	290	210	160	140
400	365	270	200	175	400	365	270	200	175
200	450	330	250	215	200	450	330	250	215
100	505	370	275	240	100	505	370	275	240

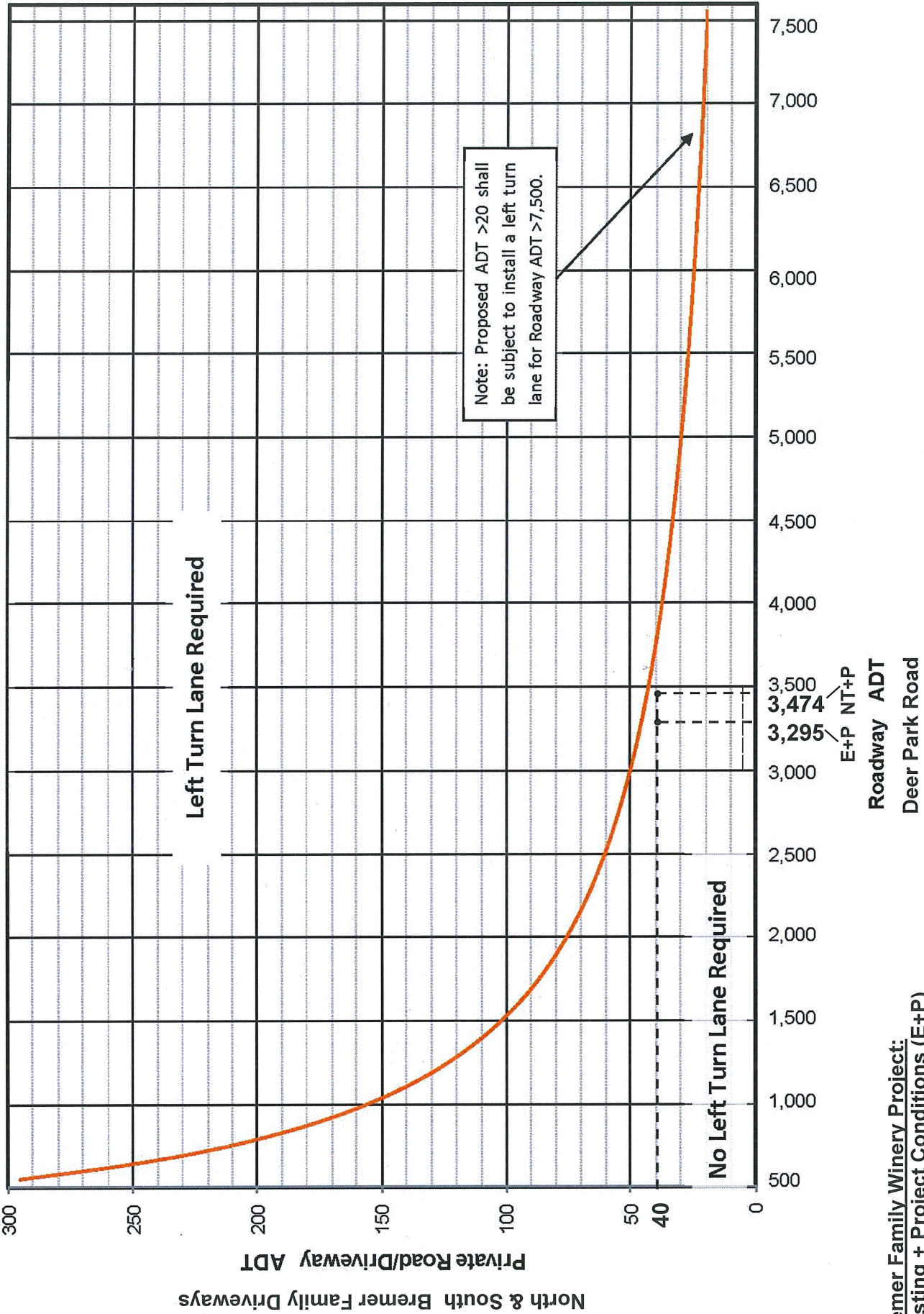
225 opposing volume

212 advancing volume  
1 left turn / 212 = 1%

Left-turn Lane Warranted?: NO  
Advancing volume of 212 with 1% left turns, and opposing volume of 225, is below minimum threshold of 800 opposing vehicles.

**Bremer Family Driveways  
Existing plus Project & Near-Term plus Project Conditions**

**LEFT TURN LANE WARRANT GRAPH**



**Bremer Family Winery Project:  
Existing + Project Conditions (E+P)  
Near Term + Project Conditions (NT+P)**

# EXHIBIT C



November 25, 2025

Matarazzo Law, APC  
1215 K Street, Suite 1210  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Attention: Andrea A. Matarazzo

**RE: Tree Survey and Habitat Assessment Letter Report  
Roadside Assessment Project Along Deer Park Road  
St. Helena, County of Napa, California**

Dear Ms. Matarazzo:

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This analysis has been prepared to document the results of Monk & Associates, Inc. (M&A) tree survey and habitat assessment conducted within the study area along Deer Park Road, located in St. Helena, Napa County (County), California (hereinafter referred to as the study area). On behalf of the Bremer Family Winery (Winery), Matarazzo Law, APC requested that M&A conduct a habitat assessment and tree survey which entailed the mapping of all trees with a cumulative diameter at breast height (DBH)<sup>1</sup> of six inches or greater and an assessment of the habitat within and adjacent to the study area.<sup>2</sup> As part of this report, the current study area site conditions and the methods and results of M&A's habitat assessment and tree survey are discussed below.

## **2. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

The Traffic Study prepared for the Winery's use permit modification application determined that a southbound left-turn lane would be warranted on Deer Park Road at the Winery's north driveway based on Section 17 of the Napa County Road and Street Standards (Napa County RSS). As such, the County indicated that installation of a left-turn lane would be required as a condition of approval.

The purpose of this analysis is to determine whether environmental constraints justify an exception to the County's left-turn lane warrant requirement pursuant to Section 3(d) of the Napa County RSS, which authorizes exceptions to "*preserve unique features of the natural environment which includes, but is not limited to, natural water courses, steep slopes, geological features, heritage oak trees, or other trees of least six inches in diameter at breast height and found by the decision-maker to be of significant importance.*" Specifically, M&A evaluated whether installation of a left-turn lane in the study area would result in significant and

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<sup>1</sup> "Breast height" is defined as 4.5 feet or 54" above ground level.

<sup>2</sup> Note that under the California Oak Woodlands Conservation Act, protected "oaks" are defined as being five inches or greater.



unavoidable adverse environmental impacts to heritage oak trees and other protected trees of significant importance.

### 3. SUMMARY CONCLUSION

As discussed below, M&A determined that the study area is part of an oak woodland and mapped 32 trees within the study area. Of these trees, M&A determined:

- **A total of 17 protected trees of significant importance, including 4 heritage oak trees, would be slated for removal.**
  - **These heritage oak trees that would be removed include Coast Live Oak trees with diameters of 38.6” and 35”.**
- **A total of 4 protected trees of significant importance, including 1 heritage oak tree, would be at substantial risk of irreversible damage through severe limbing and/or root system impacts.**

Based upon these findings, there is clear and convincing evidence that the Winery’s proposed exception request would preserve unique features of the natural environment, including heritage oak trees and other protected trees of significant importance. It is therefore M&A’s expert opinion that the requirements of Napa County RSS Section 3(d) are satisfied. Provided that all other requirements are satisfied, M&A respectfully recommends the County to grant the Winery’s exception request and to preserve the unique biological resources identified below.

### 4. REGULATORY SETTING

#### 4.1 Definitions of Protected and Heritage Trees

As Napa County has no definition of its own for what constitutes a “heritage tree” or a “protected tree,” this biological review was conducted using definitions from the City of San Mateo and Marin County Municipal Codes as outlined in the Applicant’s *Request for Exception to Napa County RSS, 975 Deer Park Road* letter and summarized below

According to the City of San Mateo, a “Heritage Tree” would include:

- 1) Any oak (*Quercus* spp.) tree with a trunk that has a diameter of ten inches or more measured at 54” above natural grade.
- 2) Any other tree with a trunk diameter of fifteen inches (47.1 inches in circumference) or more, measured at 54 inches above natural grade.
- 3) Multi-stem trees. Trees with more than one stem (arising at or below 54 inches) shall be measured at the smallest diameter point below the main union of all stems unless the union occurs below grade, in which case each stem shall be measured as a stand-alone tree. For oak trees, if one stem is ten inches or more in diameter, the tree will constitute one Heritage Tree. For all other species, if one stem is fifteen inches or more in diameter, the tree will constitute one Heritage Tree.

According to Marin County, a “Protected Tree” and “Heritage Tree,” respectively, would include:

- 1) All oaks (*Quercus* spp.) with a DBH of 6 inches or greater.



- 2) All oaks (*Quercus* spp.) with a DBH of 18 inches or greater.
- 3) A California bay (*Umbellularia californica*) with a DBH of 10 inches or greater
- 4) A California bay with a DBH of 30 inches or greater.

Based on these definitions and the least protective interpretation<sup>3</sup>, this analysis will use the following metrics for its assessment of trees within the study area and whether they qualify for exemption:

- 1) A “protected tree” to be an oak with a DBH of 6 inches or greater or any tree with a DBH of 15 inches or greater and
- 2) A “heritage tree” to be an oak with a DBH of 18 inches or greater or California bay with a DBH of 30 inches or greater.

#### 4.1.1 OAK WOODLANDS AND NAPA COUNTY PROTECTIONS

The Napa County General Plan provides strong protections for oak woodlands and to protect oak woodland habitat as outlined in the *Request for Exception to Napa County RSS, 975 Deer Park Road*. CON-24 of the General Plan sets forth the following measures:

- (1) To retain, to the maximum extent feasible, existing oak woodland communities and other significant vegetation as part of the County’s discretionary approvals.
- (2) To avoid the removal of oak species limited in distribution (e.g., valley oaks) to the maximum extent feasible.
- (3) To require retention of adequate stands of oak trees sufficient for wildlife, slope stabilization and soil protection.

Further, pursuant to the Napa County General Plan Action Item CON NR-7, the County adopted the Voluntary Oak Woodland Management Plan to provide a conservation framework for the preservation of the County’s oak woodland resources. Objectives promoted in the Voluntary Oak Woodland Management Plan include the following.

- 1) Encourage the long-term stewardship and vitality of existing oak woodlands to maintain or improve oak woodland resource values;
- 2) Encourage land use, transportation, and infrastructure planning that is consistent with oak woodlands conservation efforts; and
- 3) Maximize the total amount of oak woodland canopy cover to achieve erosion, flood, habitat, and air quality protection benefits, while recognizing the importance of including a variety of canopy cover levels within conserved and restored woodlands to provide habitat diversity.

#### 4.1.2 CALIFORNIA OAK WOODLANDS CONSERVATION ACT

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<sup>3</sup> The least protective interpretation is meant to conservatively evaluate whether a tree within the study area would meet the definition of a heritage tree. As such, if anything, this analysis underestimates the number of heritage trees. In light of the evidence, the County could reasonably conclude that additional protected trees identified qualify as heritage trees.



The California Oak Woodlands Conservation Act, approved and filed with the Secretary of State on September 24, 2004, provides funding for the conservation and protection of California's oak woodlands (Public Resources Code, Section 21083.4). The Act states:

- a) For purposes of this section, “oak” means a native tree species in the genus *Quercus*, not designated as Group A or Group B commercial species pursuant to regulations adopted by the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection pursuant to Section 4526, and that is 5 inches or more in diameter at breast height.
- b) As part of the determination made pursuant to Section 21080.1, a county shall determine whether a project within its jurisdiction may result in a conversion of oak woodlands that will have a significant effect on the environment. If a county determines that there may be a significant effect to oak woodlands, the county shall require one or more of the following oak woodlands mitigation alternatives to mitigate the significant effect of the conversion of oak woodlands:
  - 1) Conserve oak woodlands, through the use of conservation easements.
    - a. Plant an appropriate number of trees, including maintaining plantings and replacing dead or diseased trees.
    - b. The requirement to maintain trees pursuant to this paragraph terminates seven years after the trees are planted.
    - c. Mitigation pursuant to this paragraph shall not fulfill more than one-half of the mitigation requirement for the project.
    - d. The requirements imposed pursuant to this paragraph also may be used to restore former oak woodlands.
    - e. Contribute funds to the Oak Woodlands Conservation Fund as established under subdivision (a) of Section 1363 of the Fish and Game Code , for the purpose of purchasing oak woodlands conservation easements, as specified under paragraph (1) of subdivision (d) of that section and the guidelines and criteria of the Wildlife Conservation Board. A project applicant that contributes funds under this paragraph shall not receive a grant from the Oak Woodlands Conservation Fund as part of the mitigation for the project.

There are a number of exemptions from Public Resources Code Section 2108.4 including projects undertaken pursuant to an approved Natural Community Conservation Plan that includes oaks as a covered species or conserves oak habitat, affordable housing projects for lower income households, conversion of oak woodlands on agricultural land that includes land used to process plant or animal products for commercial processes or projects undertaken pursuant to Section 21080.5 of the Public Resources Code (i.e., the CEQA process). **However, the subject roadwork along Deer Park Road does not qualify for any of these exemptions.**

Further, it is important to note that the California Oak Woodlands Protection Act protects both individual oaks and oak woodland provided that that the oaks within the study area meet the definition of an “oak” as outlined at the beginning of this section (i.e., a native oak with a DBH of 5 inches or greater).



#### 4.1.3 DEFINITIONS OF OAK WOODLAND

Given the strong protections that Napa County has on oak woodlands in combination with the 2004 California Oak Woodlands Conservation Act, it is incumbent upon M&A to demonstrate whether any portion of the study area would qualify as oak woodland. As discussed below, the evidence supports such a finding.

The definitions that will be used to make this determination are as follows:

- 1) According to the California Oak Woodlands Conservation Act of 2001<sup>4</sup>, “Oak Woodlands” are defined as an oak stand with a greater than 10% canopy cover or that may have historically supported greater than 10% canopy cover.
- 2) Meets the threshold outlined by the Manual for California Vegetation, Version 2<sup>5</sup> to be considered one of the Forests and Woodlands alliances. This requires the following:
  - a) *Trees evenly distributed and conspicuous throughout stand. In areas where vegetation cover is greater than about 20 percent, tree canopy may be as low as 10 percent over denser layers of shrub and herbaceous species. In areas where vegetation is less than 20 percent total cover, trees may cover somewhat less than 10 percent (as low as about 8 percent) but are evenly distributed across the stand.*

## 5. STUDY AREA LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The study area is located along Deer Park Road at the intersection with Sanitarium Road, north of St. Helena, in Napa County, California (Figures 1-3). The study area is restricted to the road rights-of-way east and west of the road. The west side is mostly level with steep, nearly vertical cut-slope down to the existing road and the east side slopes gently to moderately downward to the east from the roadside. It is important to note that the western portion of the study area is the bottom of moderately to steeply sloped private property to the west with the trees adjacent to the roadside likely providing significant stabilization for the existing western cut slope along the roadway. The study area is bounded to the west by rural private residences to the west, the existing Deer Park Road and its right-of-way to the north and south and Bremer Family Winery to the east (Figure 3).

The west side of the study area is comprised primarily of oak woodland that is contiguous with approximately 1.32-acre of oak woodland to the west on private property (Figures 2 and 3). The east side of the study area is comprised of ruderal vegetation with a few scattered oak trees that are likely remnants from a historic oak woodland that characterizes the undeveloped portions of the surrounding area. On the west side, there are two 12” waterlines on the ground surface running parallel to each other above the cut slope, one that is metal with a break in it and no longer appears to be connected to surrounding infrastructure and the other that is PVC, in good condition, and clearly connects to existing infrastructure.

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<sup>4</sup> California Oak Woodlands Conservation Act (COWCA) (Assembly Bill 242), enacted in 2001. Cited in and included as Appendix A of the Voluntary Oak Woodland Management Plan, adopted by Napa County.

<sup>5</sup> Sawyer, J.O., T. Keeler-Wolf, and J.M. Evens. 2009. A Manual of California Vegetation, Second Edition. California Native Plant Society, Sacramento, CA. 1300 pp.



## 6. METHODS

M&A biologists, Ms. Christy Owens and Ms. Kayla Bean, conducted a site reconnaissance survey and a tree survey within the study area on October 27, 2025. M&A mapped all trees with a DBH of 5 inches or greater<sup>6</sup>. This entailed walking the study area, assessing the habitat and identifying all trees to species, measuring DBH, and mapping them. For trees that were located on private property but whose canopies were overhanging the study area, an offset for the point taken was noted in the comment section of that individual point. The private property to the west was visually surveyed from the fence line using binoculars but not traversed. All trees were mapped with a hand-held Trimble global positioning system (GPS) with submeter accuracy.

## 7. STUDY AREA VEGETATION

A complete list of plant species observed within the study area is presented in Table 1. Nomenclature used for plant names follows The Jepson Manual Second Edition (Baldwin 2012) and changes made to this manual as published on the Jepson Interchange Project website (<http://ucjeps.berkeley.edu/interchange/index.html>). Two vegetation communities occur within the study area, excluding the paved roadway which bisects it. Below we discuss the plant communities found on the project site in further detail.

### 7.1 Ruderal Herbaceous Vegetation

The eastern portion of the study area is largely composed of ruderal herbaceous vegetation with scattered coast live oak and blue oaks, remnants of the existing oak woodland in the immediate area, at the northmost and southernmost extents. This ruderal herbaceous habitat is dominated by non-native grasses such as soft chess (*Bromus hordeaceus*), ripgut brome (*B. diandrus*), Italian ryegrass (*Festuca perennis*) and wild oats (*Avena barbata*) as well as non-native forbs including cutleaf geranium (*Geranium dissectum*), Queen Anne's lace (*Daucus carota*), Italian thistle (*Carduus pycnocephalus* ssp. *pycnocephalus*), short-podded mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*), and filaree species (*Erodium botrys* and *E. moschatum*). Very few native species were observed due to the time of year, restricted primarily to California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*) and fiddleneck (*Amsinckia* sp.)

### 7.1 Oak Woodland

Oak woodlands are a characteristic vegetational cover in the foothills and valleys of California.<sup>7</sup> This plant community occurs at elevations from 196 to 2296 feet where summers are warm and dry and winters are mild.<sup>8</sup> Oak woodlands are a transitional plant community between the grasslands of the hot dry valleys and the montane forests of moist, cool uplands. This habitat has an overstory tree canopy dominated by oaks (*Quercus* spp.) and an understory dominated by grasses and forbs.

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<sup>6</sup> Please note that if a tree had multiple trunks, number of trunks and DBH of each trunk was recorded. As such, if a tree listed in Table 1 below has more than one DBH measurement, then each measurement refers to an individual trunk that is part of the same tree.

<sup>7</sup> Waddell, K.L.; Barrett, T.M. 2005. Oak woodlands and other hardwood forests of California, 1990s. PNW-RB-245. Portland, OR: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Research Station. 94 p

<sup>8</sup> Barbour, Michael G., Keeler-Wolf, Todd and Schoenherr, Allan A. 2007. Terrestrial Vegetation of California, 3rd edition. University of California Press. Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA.



Oak woodland makes up the west side of the study area and extends upslope onto private property to the west, covering the north and east facing slopes and grading into the non-native annual grassland. This community is characterized by a 50% to 75% closed canopy, dominated by coast live oak (*Q. agrifolia*) and black oak (*Q. kelloggii*) interspersed with predominantly blue oak (*Q. douglasii*) as well as California bay-laurel (*Umbellularia californica*). Black oak (*Q. kelloggii*) occurs just west and upslope on private property within the same contiguous oak woodland. There is virtually no shrub layer to speak of with only a few scattered toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*) bushes within this habitat. The understory is dominated by a similar suite of non-native grass and forb species as those observed in the ruderal herbaceous vegetation on the east side of Deer Park Road except for the dominance of cutleaf geranium and Bermuda buttercup. In summary, as illustrated in Figure 3, Exhibit A, the numerous protected trees that would be cut down or severely damaged to accommodate a left-turn lane are of significant importance because they form a substantial part of a continuous and approximately 1.32-acre of oak woodland. Based upon the study area's location adjacent to residences and agricultural lands, an intact oak woodland of this size is considered a unique feature of the environment.

## 8. WILDLIFE

A complete list of wildlife species observed within the study area is provided in Table 2 and those special-status wildlife species known to occur within 3 miles of the study area are shown on Figure 4. The presence of these species within the study area and those known to occur within 3 miles of the study area, which could reasonably be expected to utilize the subject trees for habitat, further illustrates the significant importance of these trees. Nomenclature for wildlife follows CDFW's Complete list of amphibian, reptile, bird, and mammal species in California (2016) and any changes made to species nomenclature as published in scientific journals since the publication of CDFW's list. The habitat and occurrence of wildlife is addressed in a single section herein due to the linear and restricted nature of the study area such that it is difficult to assess which species are occurring primarily in ruderal habitat and which are occurring primarily in woodland habitat.

Consistent with M&A's observations of various wildlife species in the study area (e.g., Acorn Woodpecker, Oak Titmouse, California Scrub Jay, etc.) and those special-status species that known to occur within 3 miles of the study area, [i.e., pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*) and fringed myotis (*Myotis thysanodes*)], oak trees are known to provide habitat for a variety of wildlife species. Hundreds of vertebrate species and thousands of invertebrate species are associated with California's oak habitats.<sup>9</sup> Oak acorns, leaves, wood, and sap are sustenance for a myriad of insects, birds including raptors, and mammals. Typically, ruderal communities provide habitat for those animal species adapted to living alongside humans; however, since this ruderal community is next to an oak woodland community, this ruderal community provides greater habitat value to wildlife, specifically avian species, than other ruderal communities which are often found along fully developed areas or disced fields. Bird species observed using both the oak woodland and the ruderal herbaceous vegetation within and adjacent to the study area on the October 27, 2025 survey date included birds such as Oak Titmouse (*Baeolophus inornatus*), Acorn Woodpecker (*Melanerpes formicivorus*), Dark-Eyed Junco (*Junco hymelis*), yellow-

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<sup>9</sup> Pavlik, B.M., P.C. Muick, S. Johnson, and M. Popper. 1991. Oaks of California. Cachuma Press and California Oak Foundation publishers. 184 pages. Describes the history and ecology of California oaks.



rumped warbler (*Setophagia coronata*), Lesser Goldfinch (*Spinus psaltria*), House Finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus*) as well as raptors such as Cooper’s Hawk (*Astur cooperii*). Please note that this only represents a snapshot of the wildlife that occurs in the study area due to the time of year and bird migration patterns. No stick nests, indicative of past raptor nesting, were observed within or adjacent to the study area. However, raptors such as the Cooper’s Hawk could reasonably foreseeably nest in the oak woodland canopy and isolated oak individuals on the east side, as these established trees provide adequate nesting locations. The oaks supported a large population of Acorn Woodpeckers in the area, actively vocalizing on the date of survey. Along the oak woodland edges, where the habitat transitions into ruderal grassland near the paved roadway, other terrestrial wildlife species such as Botta’s pocket gopher (*Thomomys bottae*) were observed. As the subject oak trees form a substantial part of the oak woodland edge, where a high concentration of wildlife, potentially including special-status species, is expected to occur, these trees may be fairly categorized as unique features of the natural environment due to their substantial habitat benefits.

## 9. RESULTS

M&A mapped 32 trees within the study area. The species of each tree and its diameter at breast height (DBH) was recorded. The locations of all mapped trees are shown on Exhibit A. Please note that one dead tree (a snag) was mapped as part of this survey although not identified to species. This is included because snags (i.e., standing dead trees) can provide important wildlife habitat. During M&A’s tree survey, a total of 5 native species were identified. Tree impacts were assessed in accordance with the Bremer Family Winery Option 1-Widening to the West and Option 2-Widening to the East and West Left Turn Constraints Exhibits, prepared by RSA Consulting Civil Engineers and Surveyors on November 21, 2025, included as Attachment A. Table 1 below provides a summary of the tree species identified, numbers of each species present, their locations and whether they will be impacted.



**Table 1. Summary of Tree Species along Deer Park Road**

Tree No.	Species	DBH	Location	Proposed Impact	Heritage Tree	Protected Tree	Comments
1	Gray Pine ( <i>Pinus sabiniana</i> )	18"	Cut Slope No. 1	Removal	N	Y	
2	Blue Oak ( <i>Quercus douglasii</i> )	9.7"	Cut Slope No. 1	Removal	N	Y	
3	Coast Live Oak ( <i>Quercus agrifolia</i> )	3"	Cut Slope No. 1	Removal	N	N	
4	Blue Oak ( <i>Quercus douglasii</i> )	10.3", 8.8" <sup>10</sup>	Cut Slope No. 1	Removal	N	Y	
5	Blue Oak ( <i>Quercus douglasii</i> )	15.5"	Cut Slope No. 1	Removal	N	Y	
6	Gray Pine ( <i>Pinus sabiniana</i> )	15.7"	Cut Slope No. 1	Removal	N	Y	
7	Dead	13.2"	Cut Slope No. 1	N/A	N/A	N/A	
8	California Bay Laurel ( <i>Umbellularia californica</i> )	2", 3", 1", 1"	Cut Slope No. 1	Removal	N	N	
9	<b>Coast Live Oak (<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>)</b>	<b>24.2", 16.5"</b>	<b>Cut Slope No. 1</b>	<b>Removal</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>	
10	<b>Coast Live Oak (<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>)</b>	<b>15.3", 18.5"</b>	<b>Cut Slope No. 1</b>	<b>Removal</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>	
11	<b>Coast Live Oak (<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>)</b>	<b>38.6"</b>	<b>Cut Slope No. 1</b>	<b>Removal</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>	
12	Coast Live Oak ( <i>Quercus agrifolia</i> )	14.9", 7.7", 12.8"	Cut Slope No. 2	Removal	N	Y	
13	Coast Live Oak ( <i>Quercus agrifolia</i> )	15.2"	Cut Slope No. 2	Removal	N	Y	
14	Coast Live Oak ( <i>Quercus agrifolia</i> )	6"	Cut Slope No. 2	Limbing and/or impacts to root system.	N	Y	
15	Coast Live Oak ( <i>Quercus agrifolia</i> )	14"	Cut Slope No. 2	Limbing and/or impacts to root system.	N	Y	On other side of fence
16	Coast Live Oak ( <i>Quercus agrifolia</i> )	8.5"	Cut Slope No. 2	None. Outside the impact area.	N	Y	
17	Coast Live Oak ( <i>Quercus agrifolia</i> )	30"	Cut Slope No. 2	None. Outside the impact area.	Y	Y	On other side of fence.
18	Blue Oak ( <i>Quercus douglasii</i> )	24"	Cut Slope No. 2	None. Outside the impact area.	Y	Y	On other side of fence
19	California Bay Laurel ( <i>Umbellularia californica</i> )	5", 6", 4", 4"	Cut Slope No. 2	None. Outside the impact area.	N	N	On other side of fence, overhanging
20	Coast Live Oak ( <i>Quercus agrifolia</i> )	14" 10", 17", 3"	Cut Slope No. 1	Limbing and/or impacts to root system	N	Y	On other side of fence, overhanging

<sup>10</sup> As discussed in footnote 5 above, if a tree had more than one trunk, each individual trunk was measured and recorded.



21	<b>Coast Live Oak</b> <i>(Quercus agrifolia)</i>	35"	<b>Cut Slope</b> <b>No. 1</b>	<b>Removal</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>	On other side of fence, overhanging
22	Blue Oak <i>(Quercus douglasii)</i>	10", 4"	Cut Slope No. 1	Removal	N	Y	On other side of fence, overhanging
23	Blue Oak <i>(Quercus douglasii)</i>	14.1"	East side north of Winery's driveway	Removal under Option 2 only.	N	Y	
24	Blue Oak <i>(Quercus douglasii)</i>	17"	East side north of Winery's driveway	Removal under Option 2 only.	N	Y	
25	Stone fruit <i>Prunus sp.</i>	13.8"	East side south of Winery's driveway	Removal under Option 2 only.	N	Y	Not a native tree species.
26	Coast Live Oak <i>(Quercus agrifolia)</i>	14.1", 16.2"	East side south of Winery's driveway	Removal under Option 2 only.	N	Y	
27	Blue Oak <i>(Quercus douglasii)</i>	14.8"	East side south of Winery's driveway	Removal under Option 2 only.	N	Y	
28	Coast Live Oak <i>(Quercus agrifolia)</i>	2", 2"	East side south of Winery's driveway	Removal	N	N	6 ft tall.
29	<b>Coast Live Oak</b> <i>(Quercus agrifolia)</i>	<b>15.2", 16.8", 17.8"</b>	<b>East side south of Winery's driveway</b>	<b>Limbing and/or impacts to root system</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>	
30	Coast Live Oak <i>(Quercus agrifolia)</i>	34.6"	East side south of Winery's driveway	None. Outside impact area.	Y	Y	
31	Blue Oak <i>(Quercus douglasii)</i>	12.6"	East side south of Winery's driveway	None. Outside impact area.	N	Y	
32	Coast Live Oak <i>(Quercus agrifolia)</i>	19.4"	East side south of Winery's driveway	None. Outside impact area.	Y	Y	

Of the trees mapped, 9 would be considered "heritage trees" and 27 would be considered "protected trees" under the definitions established in sections above. Of these, **up to 17 protected trees are slated for removal and 4 are at substantial risk of irreversible damage through severe limbing and/or root system impacts should the roadwork move forward.** Severe limbing and/or root system impacts are defined to be those in excess of the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) recommendations:



- 1) For limbing which entails:
  - a. removal of 15% to 20% or more of a tree's foliage in one year and/or
  - b. removal of 30% or more of the main branch structure, and
- 2) For any excavation impacts within the critical root zone or "CRZ" (i.e., typically, as measured at dripline) since 85% of the mass of a tree's root system is located within the CRZ and that most of a tree's roots are within the top 18 inches of soil.

It should be noted that it is not unusual for the root system of a mature tree to extend half again as far as the dripline (1.5x the diameter of the tree canopy.) This is why it is standard practice in most county/city tree ordinances to implement protection measures for preserved trees that include fencing preserved trees at their dripline, the "critical root zone" or "CRZ". Further, roots that are 4 inches wide are structural roots and will compromise the stability of the tree.

**Furthermore, of these 21 protected trees that would be impacted, 5 would be considered heritage trees (4 would be removed and 1 is at risk of damage by severe limbing/root system impacts.)** The trees indicated in Table 1 as proposed for impact even though they are not slated for removal is due to the perceived potential for damaging a tree based upon dripline impacts. While difficult to quantify in terms of impacts and thus not attempted herein, it is nonetheless important to also mention that trees growing close together, rely upon neighboring trees for wind protection such that when the adjacent trees are removed, this leaves the remaining trees more vulnerable to wind throw and structural damage/death.

**The trees on the west side<sup>11</sup> of Deer Park Road are clearly considered to be part of an "oak woodland" as this area is contiguous with an approximately 1.32-acre oak woodland on privately parcels to the west. The oak woodland in this area and within the study area is dominated by coast live oak with a 50% to 75% closed canopy. Based on the California Oak Woodlands Conservation Act of 2004 and the Manual for California Vegetation's minimum canopy requirements, the trees on the west side of the study area far exceed these thresholds to be considered part an "oak woodland." Further, the oak woodland to the west meets all membership rules under the Manual for California Vegetation (MCV) for the *Quercus agrifolia* Forest & Woodland Alliance (Coast live oak woodland and forest). Lastly, of the trees mapped within the study area and slated for impact by the proposed roadwork, 19 would be considered "oaks" pursuant to the California Oak Woodlands Conservation Act and warrant protection (14 would be removed and 5 may be significantly affected by limbing/root system impacts)<sup>12</sup>** These environmental qualities demonstrate that the subject trees comprise a unique feature of the natural environment, an oak woodland, that should be preserved to the extent feasible.

## CONCLUSIONS

M&A conducted a tree survey and habitat assessment of the study area along Deer Park Road on October 27, 2025 and inventoried a total of 32 existing trees, a number of which that occur within/immediately adjacent to the proposed roadwork footprint, would be considered "protected

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<sup>11</sup> Includes Cut Slope 1 and Cut Slope 2.

<sup>12</sup> 24 trees within the study area overall would be considered "oaks" pursuant to the Oak Woodlands Conservation Act.



trees” (21 trees), “heritage trees” (5 trees)<sup>13</sup> under County ordinances and/or “oaks” (19 trees)<sup>14</sup> pursuant to the California Oak Woodlands Conservation Act warranting protection. Further, the areas adjacent to the study area were visually surveyed from the project boundary to determine if any trees could be considered part of an oak woodland and thus, merit protection pursuant to the Napa County General Plan, the County’s Voluntary Oak Woodland Management Plan and the California Oak Woodlands Conservation Act.

Based upon the trees on the west side clearly being part of a contiguous stand of oak woodland and the number of protected and heritage trees as well as oaks regulated pursuant to the Oak Woodlands Conservation Act which would be impacted, the proposed roadwork appears to warrant an exception pursuant to Section 3 of the Napa County RSS to “*preserve unique features of the natural environment which includes, but is not limited to, natural water courses, steep slopes, geological features, heritage oak trees, or other trees of least six inches in diameter at breast height and found by the decision-maker to be of significant importance.*”

This concludes M&A’s tree inventory and habitat assessment report. Should you have any questions or wish to discuss any other aspect of this analysis, please do not hesitate to contact me at (925) 947-4867 ext. 206 or [christy@monkassociates.com](mailto:christy@monkassociates.com).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Christy Owens". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

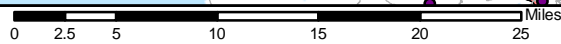
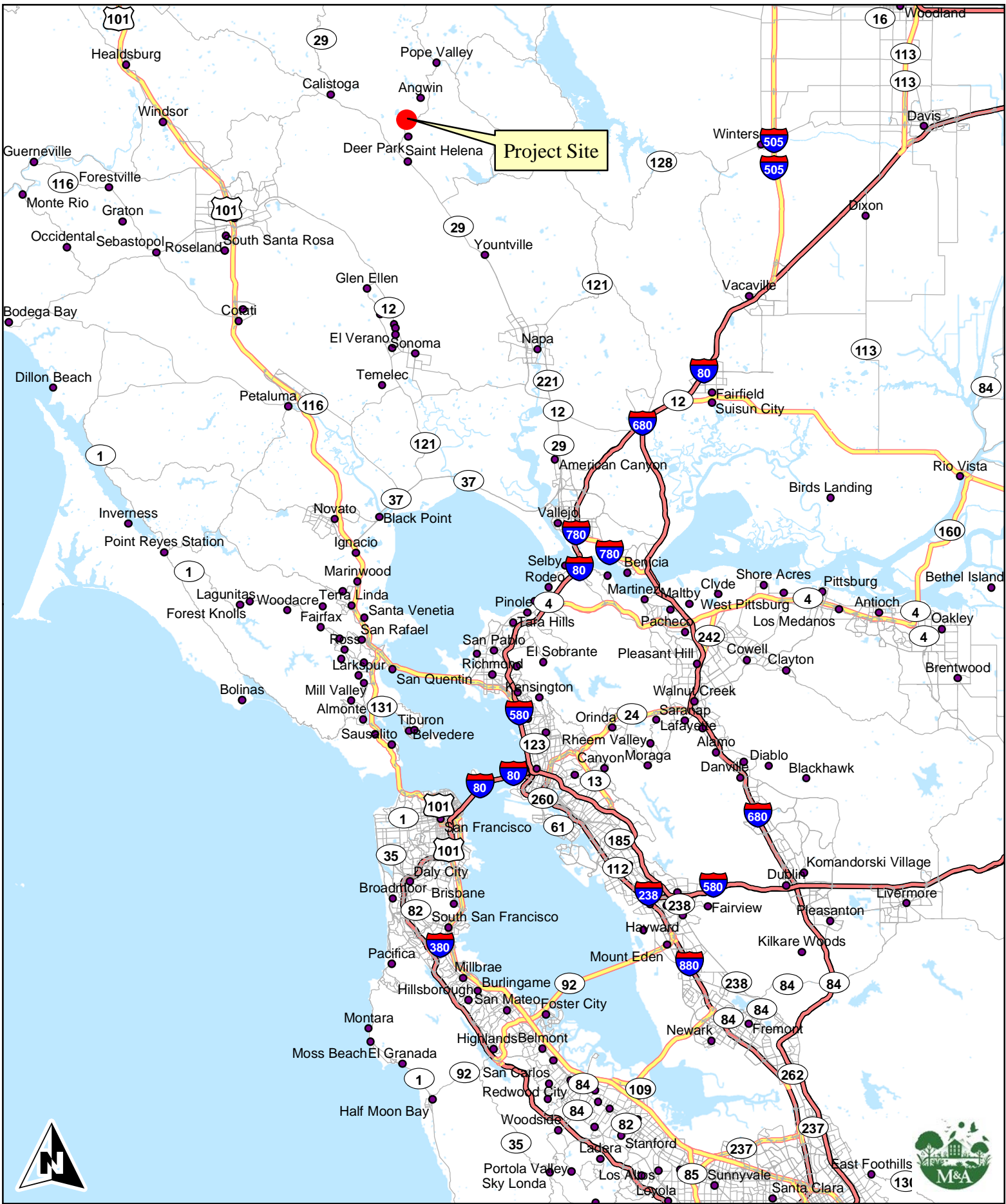
Christy Owens  
Associate Biologist

Attachments: Figure 1-4  
Exhibit A  
Table 1  
Table 2  
Attachment A.

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<sup>13</sup> A subset of the 21 protected trees.

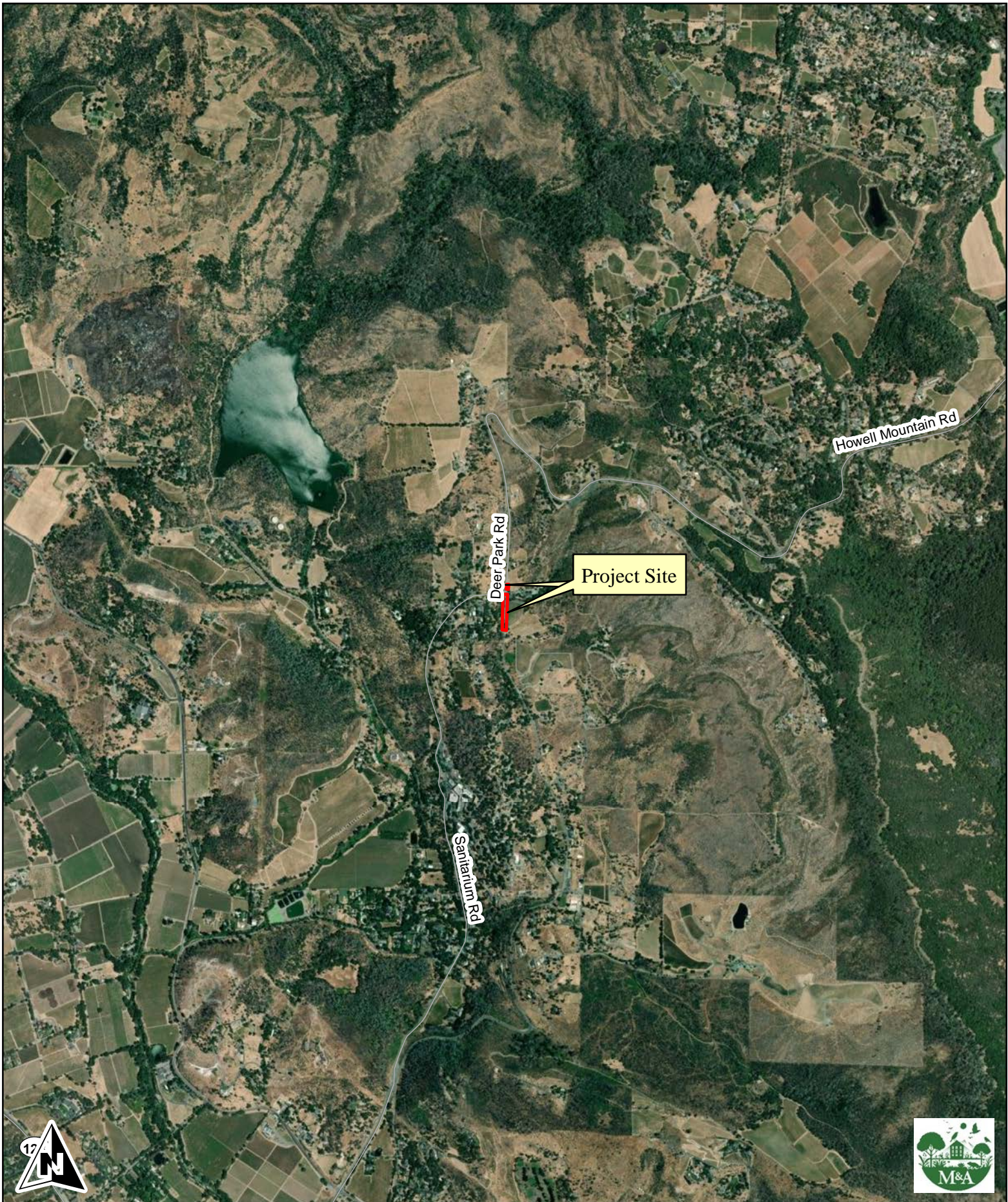
<sup>14</sup> A subset of the 21 protected trees.



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Figure 1. Roadside Assessment Along Deer Park Road  
 Regional Map  
 St. Helena, County of Napa, California

County: Napa  
 Map Preparation Date: October 31, 2025



Monk & Associates  
 Environmental Consultants  
 1136 Saranap Avenue, Suite Q  
 Walnut Creek, California 94595  
 (925) 947-4867

Figure 2. Roadside Assessment Along Deer Park Road  
 Location Map  
 St. Helena, County of Napa, California



38.551076 -122.472222  
 Section 13: T08N R06W  
 7.5-Minute Saint Helena quadrangles  
 Aerial Photograph Source: ESRI  
 Map Preparation Date: October 31, 2025

Project Areas





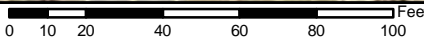
Monk & Associates  
Environmental Consultants  
1136 Saranap Avenue, Suite Q  
Walnut Creek, California 94595  
(925) 947-4867

0 25 50 100 150 200 250 Feet

Figure 3. Aerial Photograph of  
Roadside Assessment Along Deer Park Road  
St. Helena, County of Napa, California

Aerial Photograph Source: ESRI  
Map Preparation Date: October 31, 2025

 Tree  
 Project Areas



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**Exhibit A. Tree Survey**  
 Roadside Assessment Along Deer Park Road  
 St. Helena, County of Napa, California

Aerial Photograph Source: ESRI  
 Map Preparation Date: October 27, 2025

**Table 1**  
**Plant Species Observed Within the Study Area**

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**Angiosperms - Dicots**


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**Apiaceae**

\**Daucus carota* Queen Anne's lace

**Apocynaceae**

\**Nerium oleander* Oleander

**Asteraceae**

\**Carduus pycnocephalus subsp. pycnocephalus* Italian thistle

\**Lactuca serriola* Prickly lettuce

**Boraginaceae**

*Amsinckia sp.* Fiddleneck

**Brassicaceae**

\**Hirschfeldia incana* Short-podded mustard

**Euphorbiaceae**

*Euphorbia sp.* Euphorbia

**Fabaceae**

\**Trifolium hirtum* Rose clover

**Geraniaceae**

\**Erodium botrys* Broad-leaf filaree

\**Erodium moschatum* White-stem filaree

\**Geranium dissectum* Cut-leaf geranium

\**Geranium sp.* Cranesbill

**Lauraceae**

*Umbellularia californica* California bay

**Oxalidaceae**

\**Oxalis pes-caprae* Bermuda buttercup

**Papaveraceae**

*Eschscholzia californica* California poppy

**Plantaginaceae**

\**Plantago lanceolata* English plantain

**Rosaceae**

*Heteromeles arbutifolia* Toyon

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**Angiosperms - Monocots**


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**Araceae**

\**Zantedeschia aethiopica* Calla lily

**Poaceae**

\**Avena barbata* Slender wild oat

\**Briza maxima* Rattlesnake grass

\**Bromus hordeaceus* Soft chess

---

**Table 1**  
**Plant Species Observed Within the Study Area**

---

<i>*Festuca perennis</i>	perennial ryegrass
<i>*Stipa miliacea var. miliacea</i>	Smilo grass

---

\* Indicates a non-native species

**Table 2**  
**Wildlife Species Observed within the Study Area**

---

**Reptiles**

Western fence lizard	<i>Sceloporus occidentalis</i>
----------------------	--------------------------------

---

**Birds**

Turkey Vulture	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>
Cooper's Hawk	<i>Astur cooperii</i>
Anna's Hummingbird	<i>Calypte anna</i>
Acorn Woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes formicivorus</i>
California Scrub Jay	<i>Aphelocoma californica</i>
Common Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>
Oak Titmouse	<i>Baeolophus inornatus</i>
Northern Mockingbird	<i>Mimus polyglottos</i>
Yellow-rumped Warbler	<i>Setophaga coronata</i>
Dark-eyed Junco	<i>Junco hyemalis</i>
House Finch	<i>Haemorhous mexicanus</i>
Lesser Goldfinch	<i>Spinus psaltria</i>

---

**Mammals**

Botta's pocket gopher	<i>Thomomys bottae</i>
-----------------------	------------------------

# BREMER FAMILY WINERY - OPTION 1 WIDENING TO WEST LEFT TURN CONSTRAINTS EXHIBIT

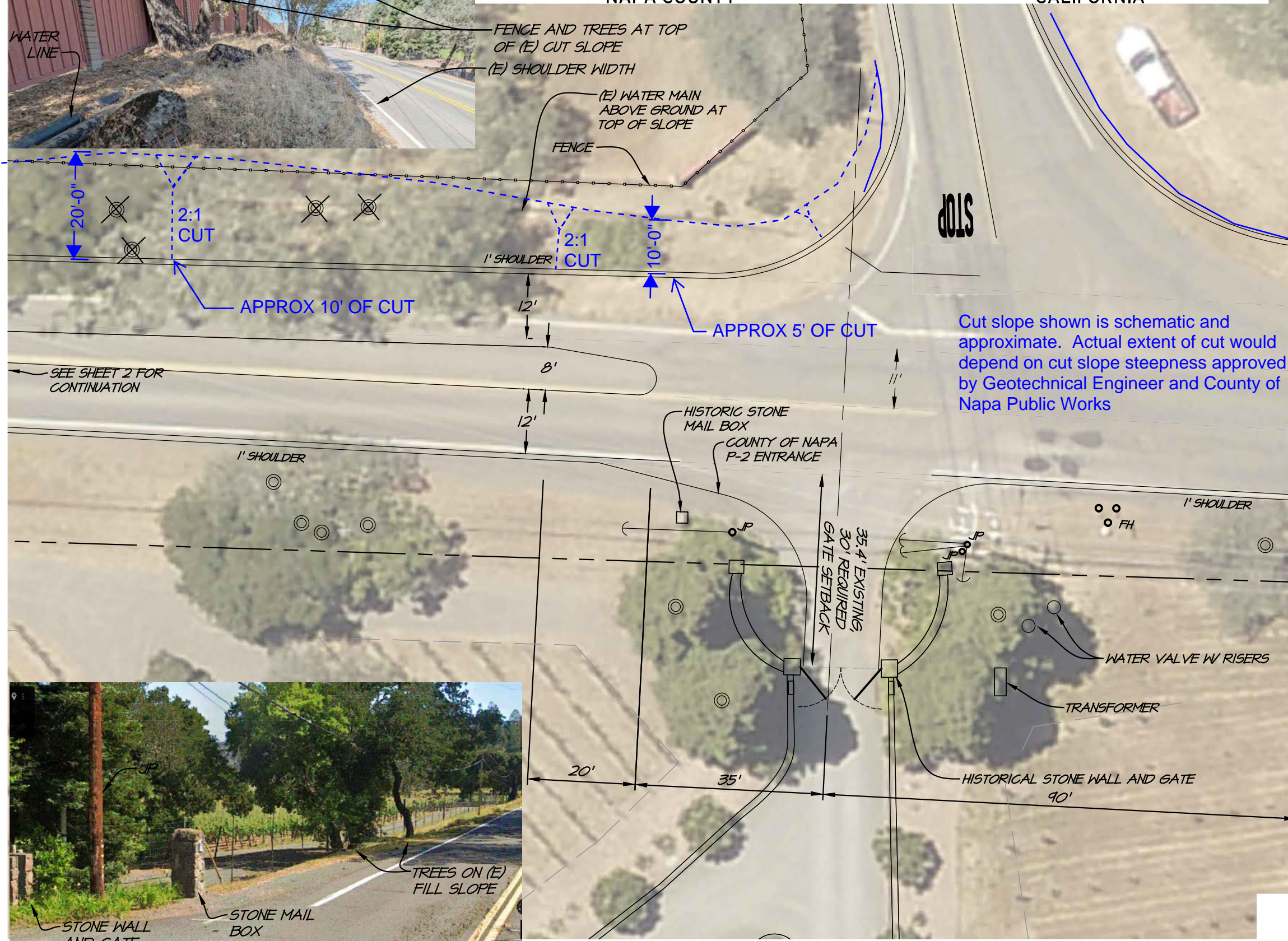
NAPA COUNTY CALIFORNIA



WATER LINE  
FENCE AND TREES AT TOP OF (E) CUT SLOPE  
(E) SHOULDER WIDTH



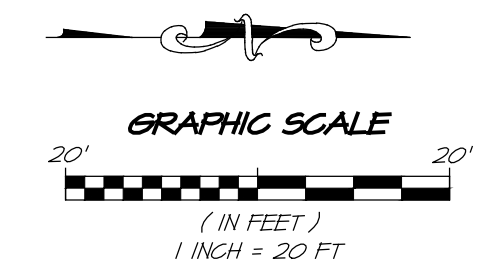
STONE WALL AND GATE  
WATER VALVE AND RISERS



Cut slope shown is schematic and approximate. Actual extent of cut would depend on cut slope steepness approved by Geotechnical Engineer and County of Napa Public Works



TREES ON (E) FILL SLOPE  
STONE WALL AND GATE  
STONE MAIL BOX



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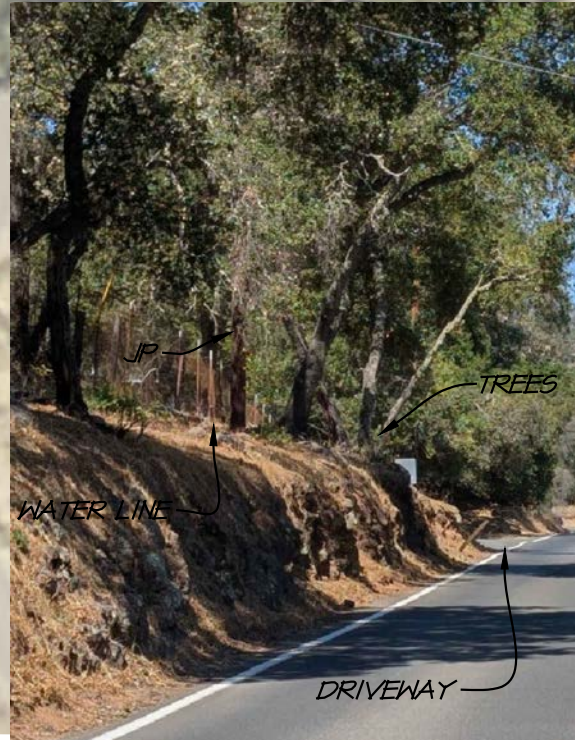
# BREMER FAMILY WINERY - OPTION 1 WIDENING TO WEST

## LEFT TURN CONSTRAINTS EXHIBIT

NAPA COUNTY CALIFORNIA



Cut slope shown is schematic and approximate. Actual extent of cut would depend on cut slope steepness approved by Geotechnical Engineer and County of Napa Public Works



**GRAPHIC SCALE**

20' 20'

( IN FEET )  
1 INCH = 20 FT

SHEET 2 OF 2

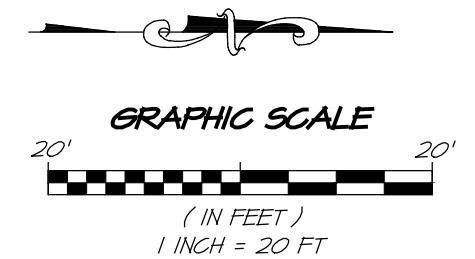
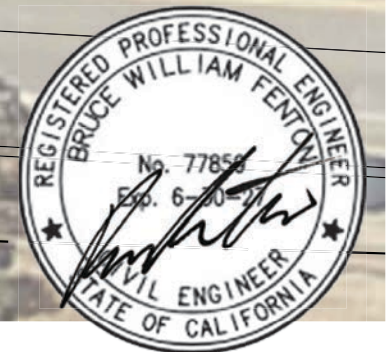
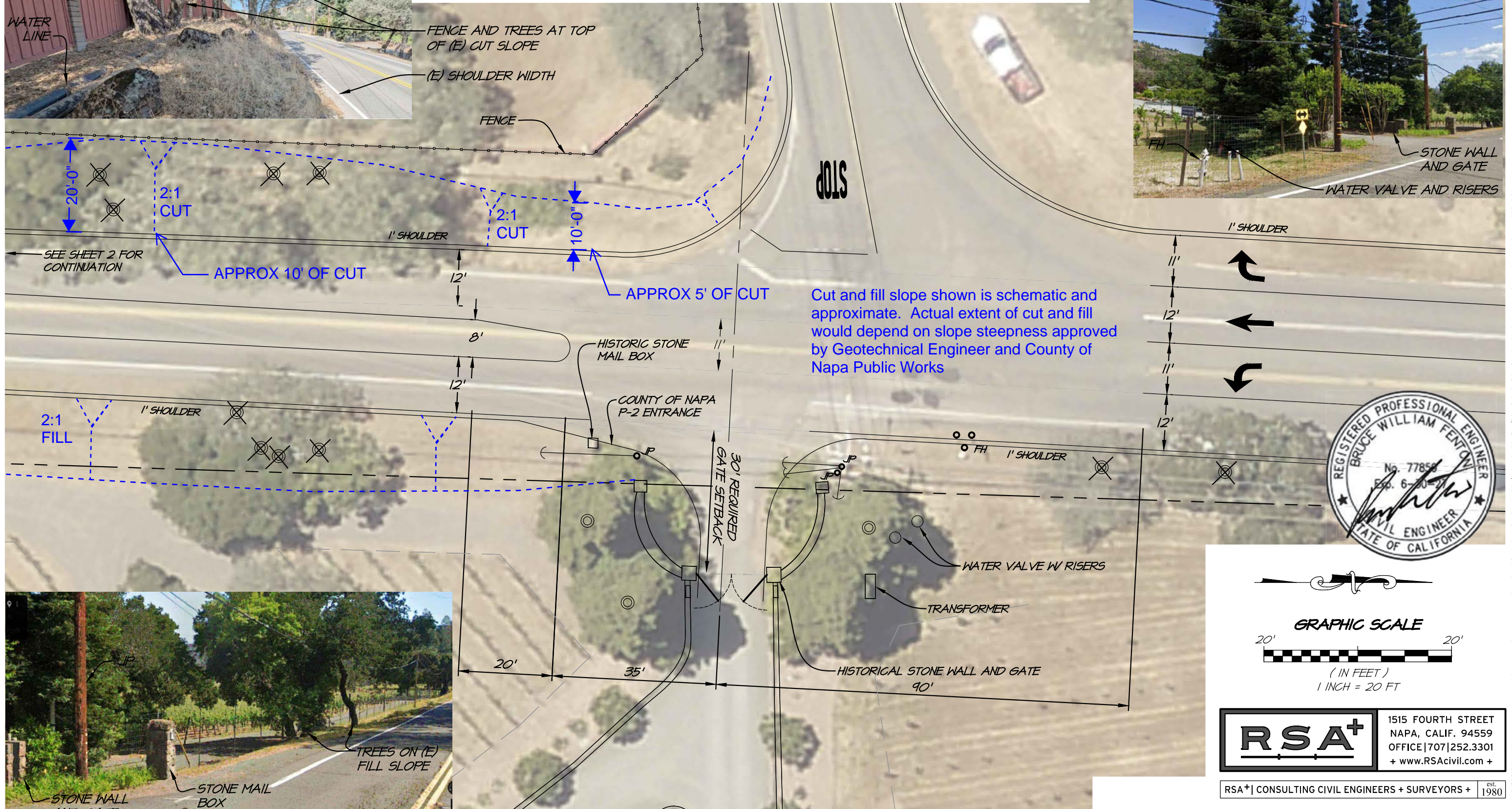
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# BREMER FAMILY WINERY - OPTION 2 WIDENING TO EAST AND WEST LEFT TURN CONSTRAINTS EXHIBIT

NAPA COUNTY CALIFORNIA



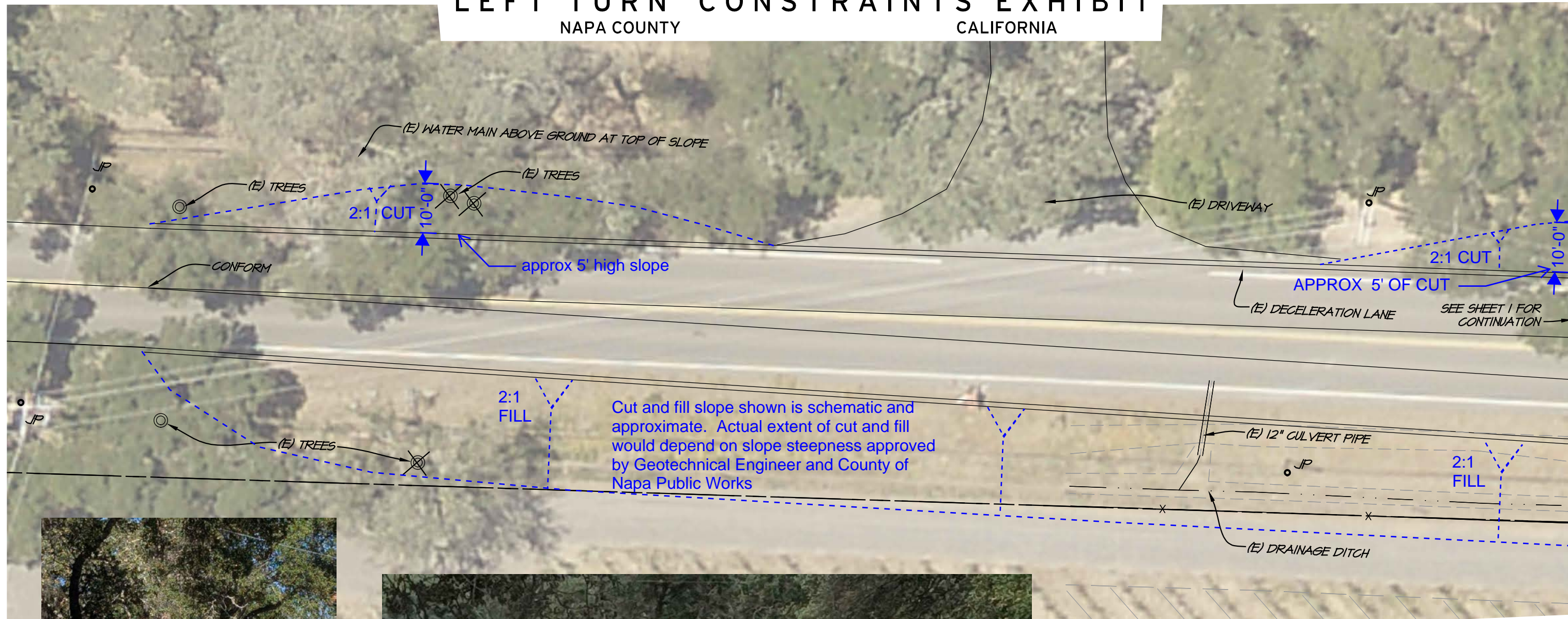
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# BREMER FAMILY WINERY - OPTION 2 WIDENING TO EAST AND WEST LEFT TURN CONSTRAINTS EXHIBIT

NAPA COUNTY CALIFORNIA



Cut and fill slope shown is schematic and approximate. Actual extent of cut and fill would depend on slope steepness approved by Geotechnical Engineer and County of Napa Public Works



**GRAPHIC SCALE**

20' 20'

( IN FEET )  
1 INCH = 20 FT

**SHEET 2 OF 2**

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**From:** [Andrea Matarazzo](#)  
**To:** [Lederer, Steven](#); [Bordona, Brian](#)  
**Cc:** [Trippi, Sean](#); [Anderson, Laura](#); [Christian Smit](#); [Jean Seaton](#); [Kazmi, Syed Ahsan](#)  
**Subject:** RE: P22-0006 Bremer Family Winery Major Modification, 975 Deer Park Road, St. Helena -- RSS Exception Request  
**Date:** Friday, December 12, 2025 3:07:39 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[P22-00086 Bremer Family Winery RSS Exception Request Updated Constraints Exhibit.pdf](#)  
[P22-00086 Historic Resources Story - Ballentine Vineyards.pdf](#)  
[P22-00086 Historic Resources Bremer Family Winery - The Napa Wine Project.pdf](#)

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Good afternoon, Steve.

We appreciate your questions and prompt review. Regarding the site visit, are you available during any of the following times next week?

- Wednesday 12/17: until 11 am
- Thursday 12/18: all day

In response to your questions:

1. Construction would extend beyond the County ROW

- Attached please find the updated Constraints Exhibit, which shows the approximate 60' County ROW. Under both Options 1 and 2, construction would extend outside the County ROW.
- Under Option 1, construction would extend beyond the County ROW on the west side of Deer Park Road (i.e., along Cut Slope No. 1).
- Under Option 2, construction would extend beyond the County ROW to both the east and the west.

2. Evidence Regarding Historic Stone Wall and Mailbox

- Please see pages 55-57 of the PDF submitted on November 26, 2026 , which include pictures of the stone gate and mailbox.
- For further documentation regarding the construction of the existing stone gate and mailbox between 1922 and 1933 by John Ballentine as discussed on page 24 of our letter, please see the following articles (attached):
  - The Napa Wine Project, *Bremer Family Winery*, <https://www.napawineproject.com/bremer-family-winery/> ["But the Leuenberger's original winery in Deer Park was sold and went through several owners including John Ballentine (same family who operates Ballentine

Vineyards) who purchased the site in 1922 and reopened operations after the repeal of Prohibition in 1933”].

- Ballentine Vineyards, *History: 1910-1914, John J. Ballentine*, <https://www.ballentinevineyards.com/story/> [“In 1922, John purchased the old Sutter Home Winery . . . on Howell Mountain. . . . He renamed it Ballentine’s Deer Park Winery. . . . John was among the first to apply for a winery bond when prohibition was repealed in 1933. . . . During this time, John Ballentine was the first to suggest to Robert Mondavi that their family should consider reviving Charles Krug’s pioneer stone winery,” similar to how Mr. Ballentine revived the historic stone Sutter Home Winery].

### 3. Infeasibility of Relocating Distribution Joint Pole

- This impact statement is based on the complexity of moving the distribution joint pole. It should also be noted that the cost of installing a duplicate system and then reenergizing/reconnecting would be very expensive in this instance, particularly for power. While “[m]onetary hardship alone shall not be considered as a basis for an exception,” these monetary impacts are directly related to the material physical site limitations that should be accommodated. (Napa County RSS, Section 3(d), (e).)
- See PDF at pages 23 and 52.

### 4. Infeasibility of Relocating HMMWC Pipe Line

- The water line is on top of a cut slope that would be graded. (Pages 28, 30, 45-46 of PDF submittal.) Therefore, routing the water line underground of its current location is not an option. However, even if it were, it would not be feasible to do so because routing the pipe under solid rock formations for approximately 200 feet cannot realistically be accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time, taking into account economic, environmental, social, and technological factors.
- If a left-turn lane were constructed, it would not be feasible to move the water line into the travel lane. We understand that due to the substantial grading required, the pipe would have to be placed at least 3.5 feet underground, which would be expensive, require coordination with HMMWC, and result in further roadway disturbance and disruptions and is therefore infeasible due to economic, environmental, social, and technological factors.
- It is not feasible to put the water line on the other side of the road. This would require the water line to be routed below Deer Park Road twice to reconnect with the existing water line. Due to economic, environmental, social (e.g., roadway disruptions), and technological factors, this extensive construction would not be feasible.

Thank you again for your careful consideration and review. Please let me know if you have any further

questions.

Andrea

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**From:** Lederer, Steven <Steven.Lederer@countyofnapa.org>

**Sent:** Friday, December 5, 2025 4:13 PM

**To:** Andrea Matarazzo <Andrea@matarazzolaw.net>; Bordona, Brian <Brian.Bordona@countyofnapa.org>

**Cc:** Trippi, Sean <Sean.Trippi@countyofnapa.org>; Anderson, Laura <Laura.Anderson@countyofnapa.org>; Christian Smit <Christian@matarazzolaw.net>; Jean Seaton <Jean@matarazzolaw.net>; Kazmi, Syed Ahsan <SyedAhsan.Kazmi@countyofnapa.org>

**Subject:** RE: P22-0006 Bremer Family Winery Major Modification, 975 Deer Park Road, St. Helena -- RSS Exception Request

Andrea,

Thank you for a thorough and well-organized submittal. It touches most of the bases, but I do have a few questions, and then I would suggest we meet on site to wrap up the evaluation.

1. The request indicates that construction of the left turn lane (LTL) would require entry onto private property. The more relevant question is whether construction would extend outside the county ROW. Can your civil please update the drawings for options 1 and 2 to show the ROW lines?
2. The proposal states the rock walls and mailbox structure are 100 years old and are therefore historic but does not provide any supporting evidence as to these statements. To be clear, I am not asking for a full-blown historical study, just some evidence (pictures, references in a book, or something similar), that supports the above statement of age/historical significance.

3. The request states that moving the utility poles would disrupt telecommunications service in the area. Can you provide supporting evidence for this claim? In my experience utility poles are often moved and rarely is service disrupted.
4. The request states that moving the HMMWC pipe line is not “feasible”. Why is that so?

If these answers are already in your request and I missed it, my apologies. Just point me in the right direction.

My schedule is not ridiculously full between now and 12/23, so if we can get expeditious answers to these questions, and then can find a good day to meet, I should be able to provide a response within 2 weeks of the site visit.

Steve

---

**From:** Andrea Matarazzo <[Andrea@matarazzolaw.net](mailto:Andrea@matarazzolaw.net)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 26, 2025 2:33 PM  
**To:** Bordona, Brian <[Brian.Bordona@countyofnapa.org](mailto:Brian.Bordona@countyofnapa.org)>; Lederer, Steven <[Steven.Lederer@countyofnapa.org](mailto:Steven.Lederer@countyofnapa.org)>  
**Cc:** Trippi, Sean <[Sean.Trippi@countyofnapa.org](mailto:Sean.Trippi@countyofnapa.org)>; Anderson, Laura <[Laura.Anderson@countyofnapa.org](mailto:Laura.Anderson@countyofnapa.org)>; Christian Smit <[Christian@matarazzolaw.net](mailto:Christian@matarazzolaw.net)>; Jean Seaton <[Jean@matarazzolaw.net](mailto:Jean@matarazzolaw.net)>  
**Subject:** P22-0006 Bremer Family Winery Major Modification, 975 Deer Park Road, St. Helena -- RSS Exception Request

[External Email - Use Caution]

Good afternoon!

As set forth in the attached letter and supporting exhibits, in connection with application No. P22-00086, the Bremer Family Winery respectfully requests an exception to the County’s left-turn lane warrant requirement established by Section 17 of the Napa County Road and Street Standards.

We appreciate your time and consideration. Please let me know if you have any questions or require additional information in support of the Winery’s request.

Thank you, and have a wonderful Thanksgiving.  
Andrea

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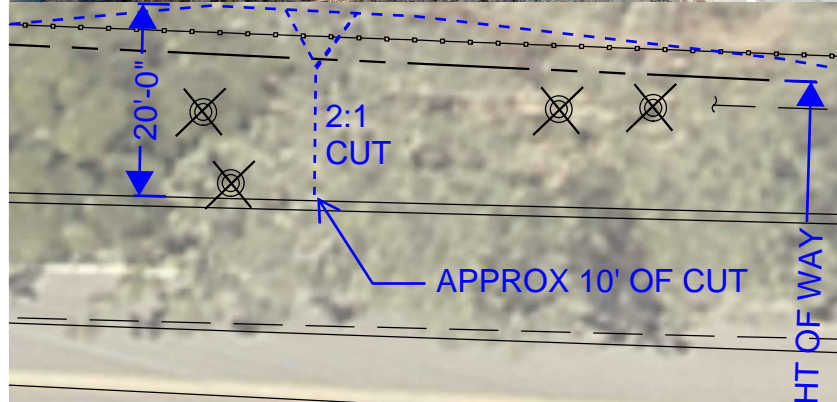
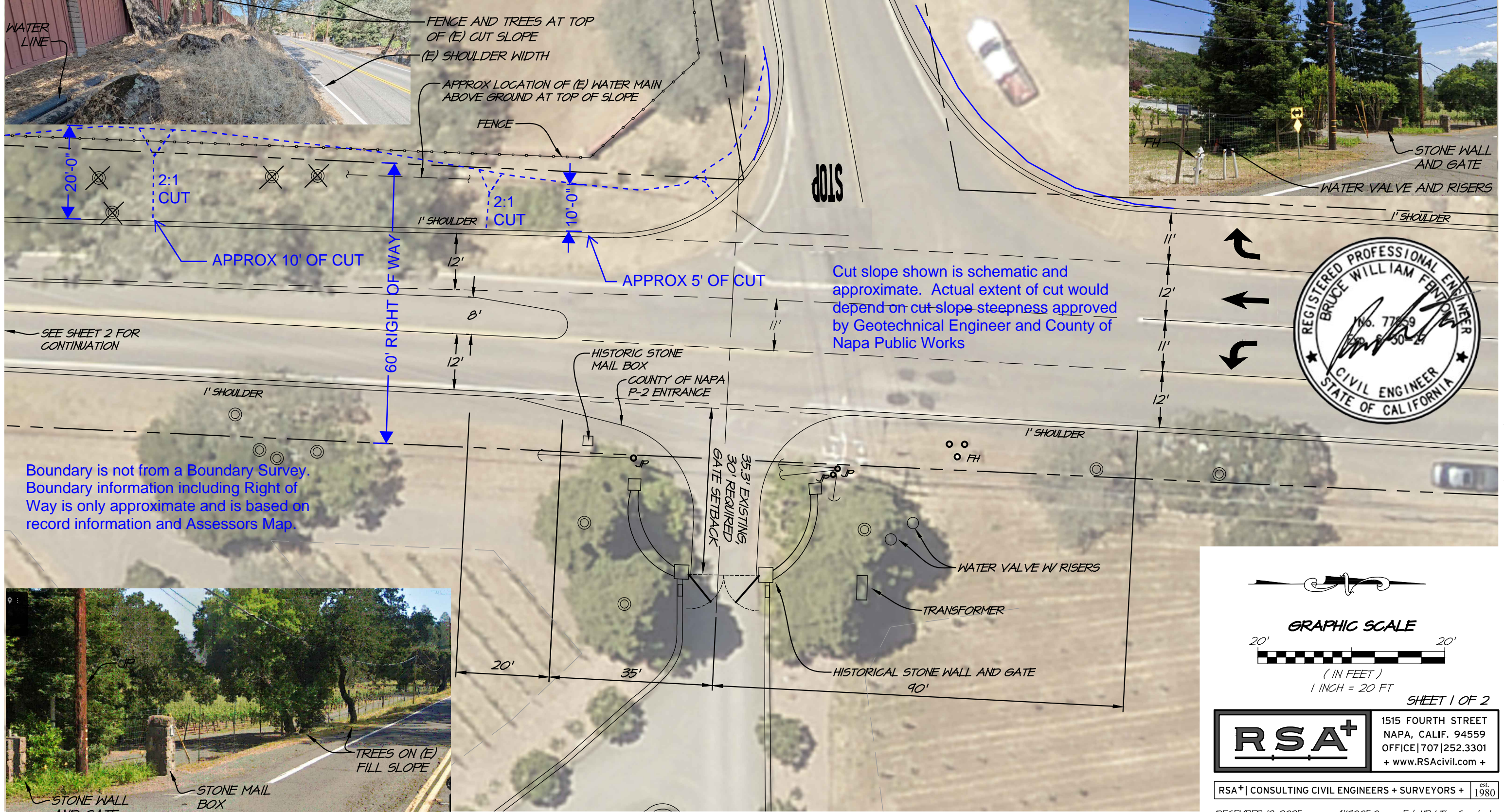
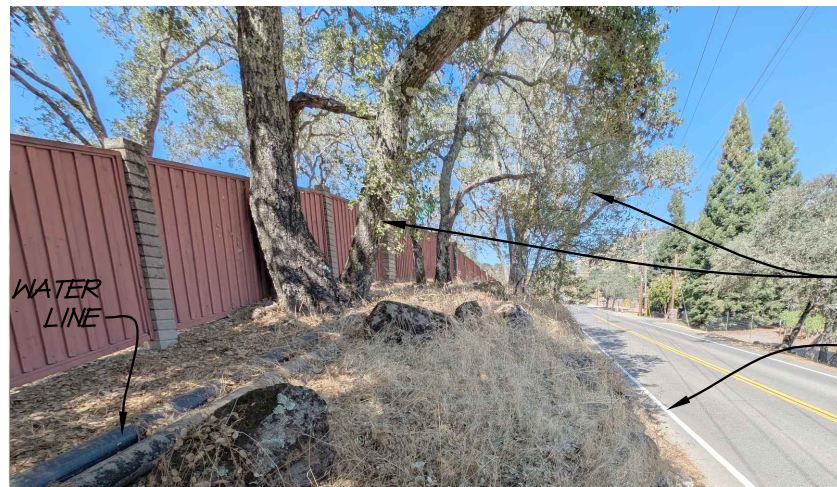
Andrea A. Matarazzo  
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# BREMER FAMILY WINERY - OPTION 1 WIDENING TO WEST

## LEFT TURN CONSTRAINTS EXHIBIT

NAPA COUNTY CALIFORNIA



SEE SHEET 2 FOR CONTINUATION

Boundary is not from a Boundary Survey. Boundary information including Right of Way is only approximate and is based on record information and Assessors Map.



GRAPHIC SCALE  
20' 20'  
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1 INCH = 20 FT

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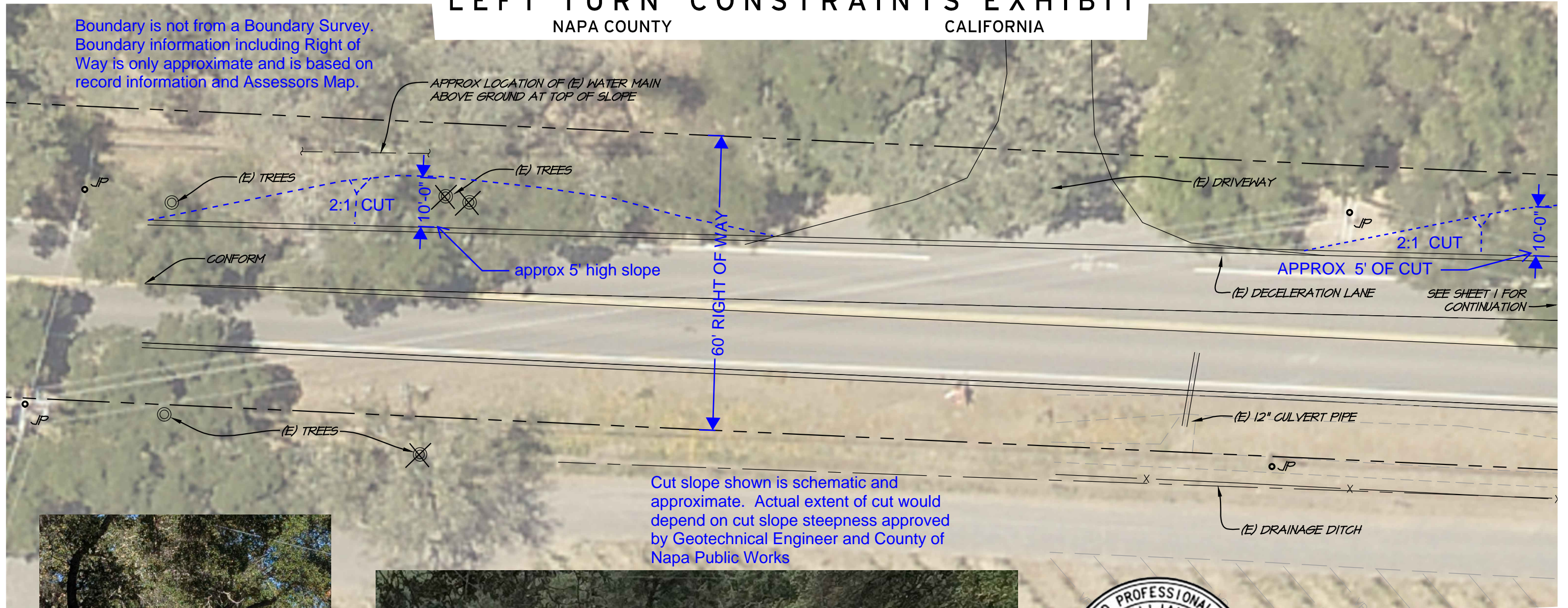
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# BREMER FAMILY WINERY - OPTION 1 WIDENING TO WEST

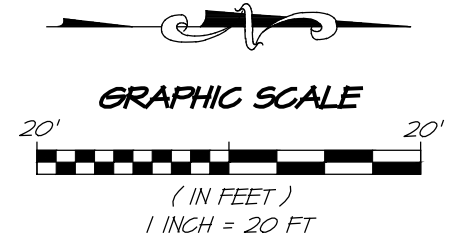
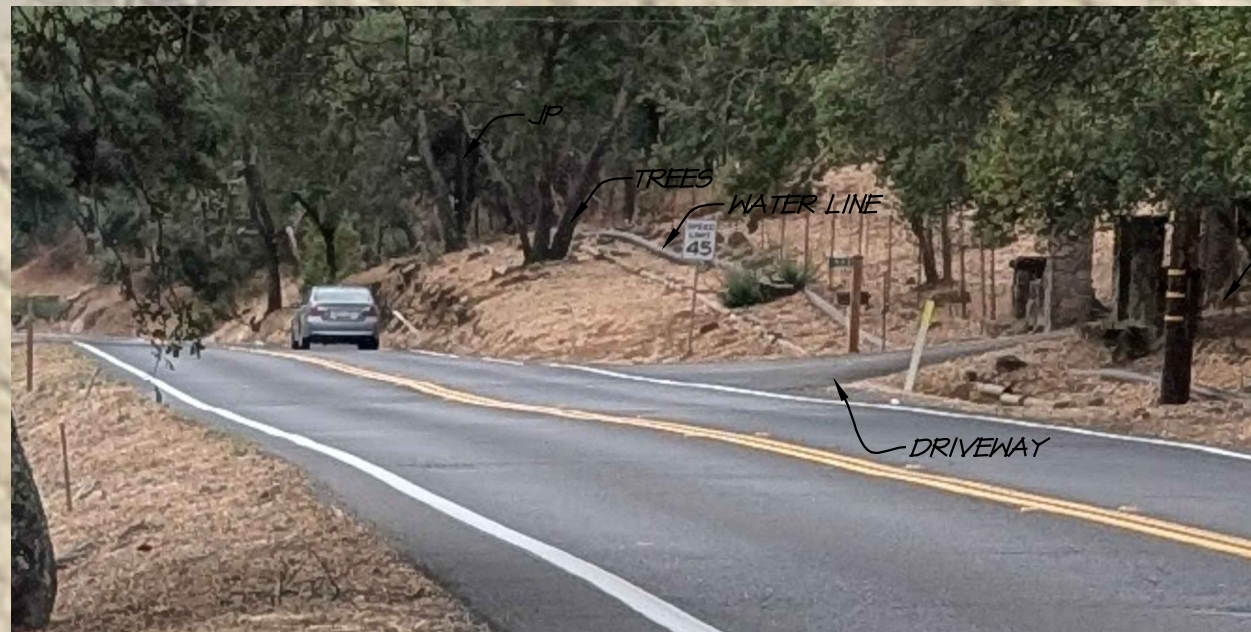
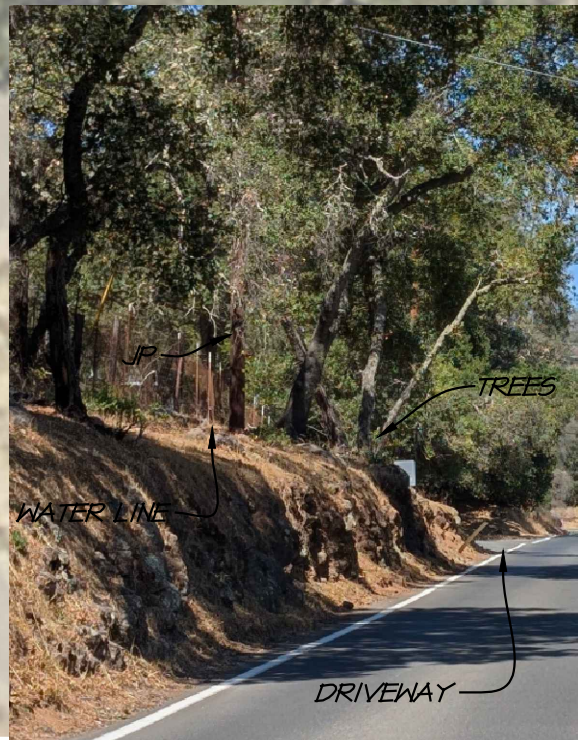
## LEFT TURN CONSTRAINTS EXHIBIT

NAPA COUNTY CALIFORNIA

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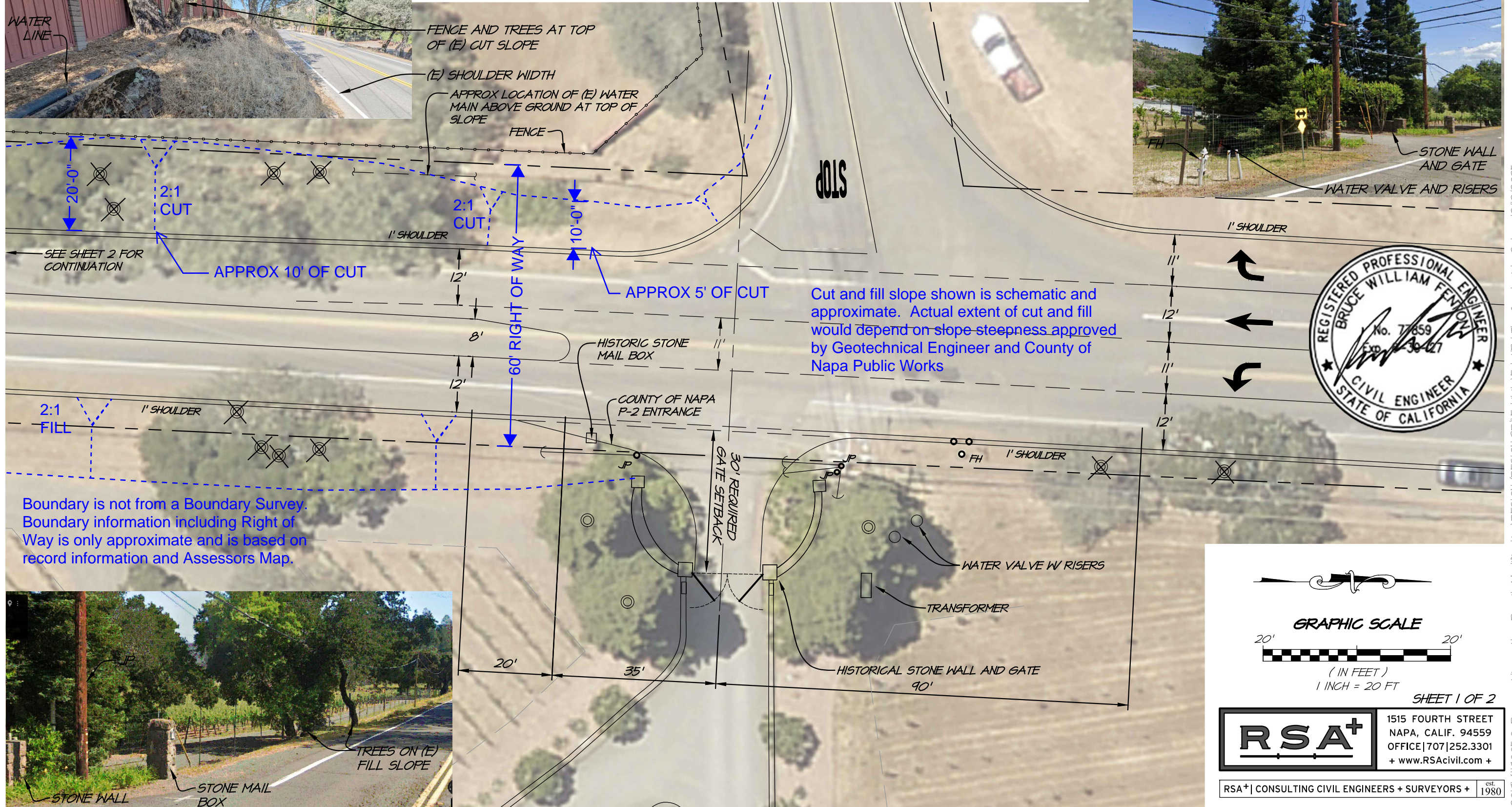
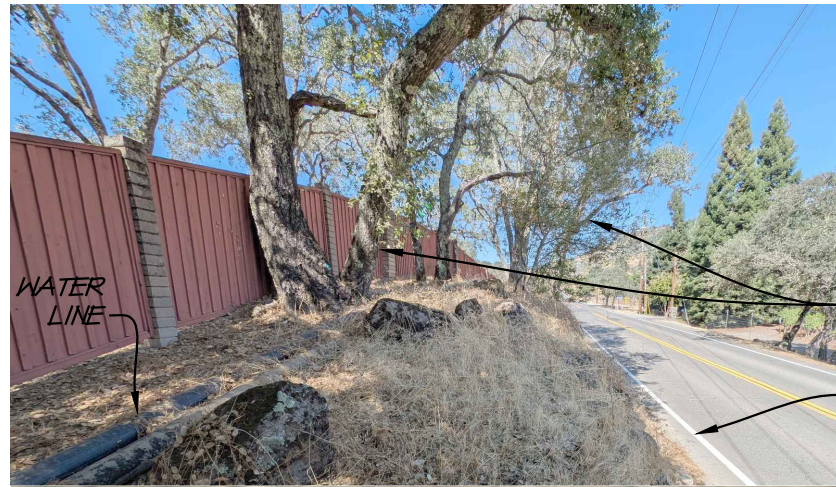
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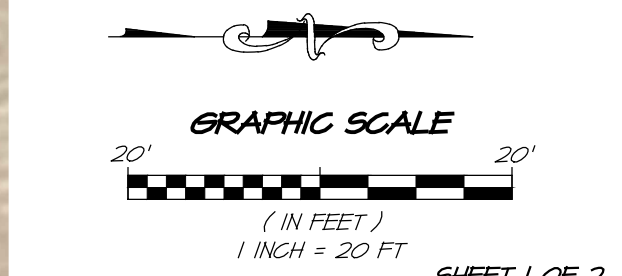
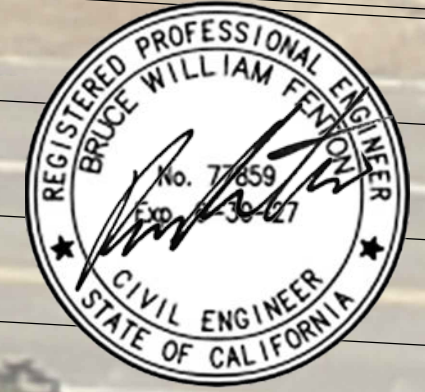
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# BREMER FAMILY WINERY - OPTION 2 WIDENING TO EAST AND WEST LEFT TURN CONSTRAINTS EXHIBIT NAPA COUNTY CALIFORNIA



Cut and fill slope shown is schematic and approximate. Actual extent of cut and fill would depend on slope steepness approved by Geotechnical Engineer and County of Napa Public Works



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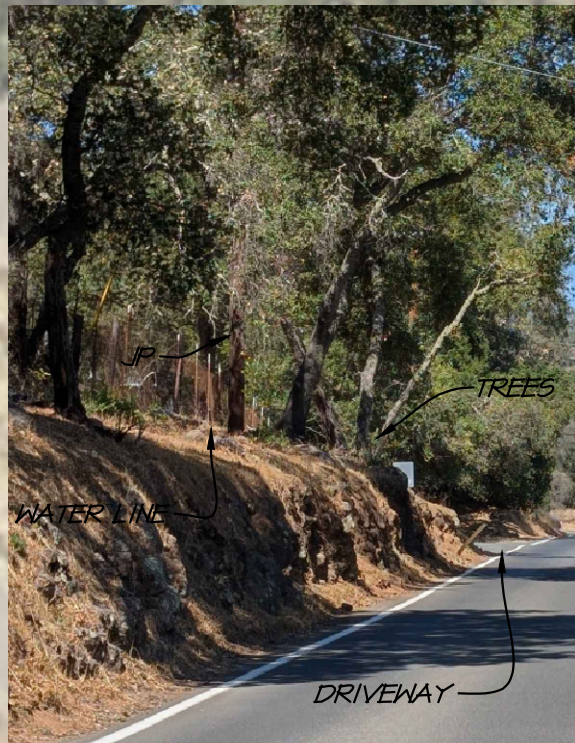
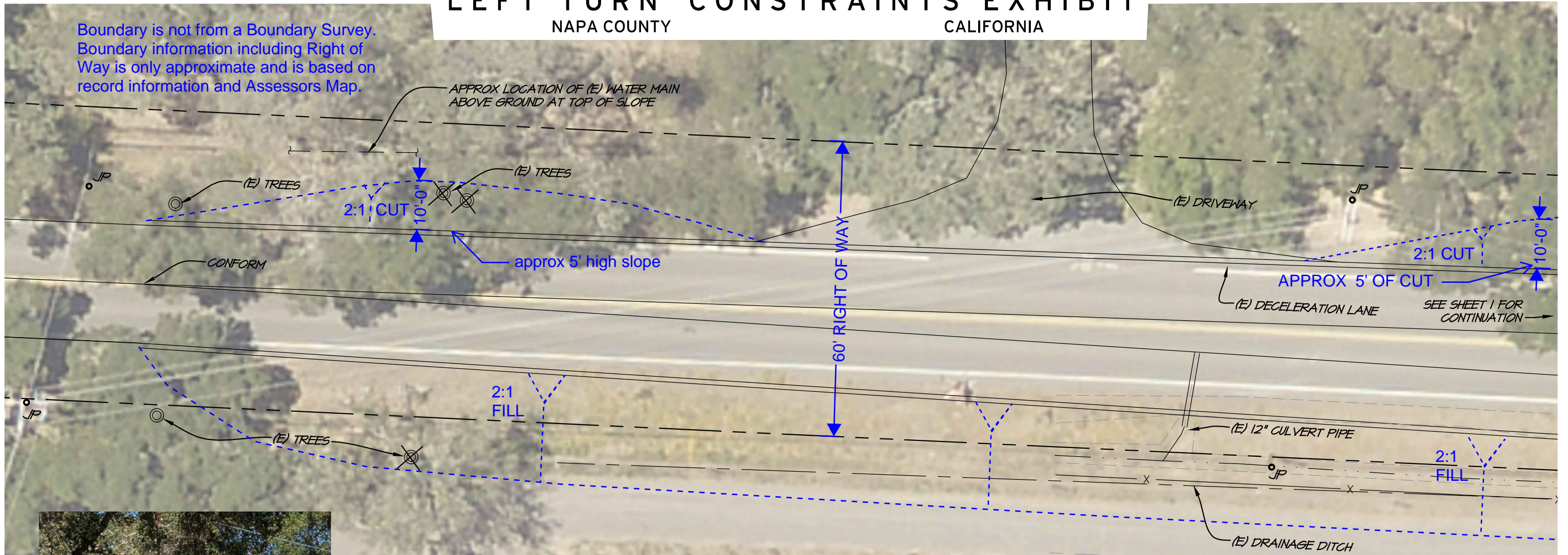
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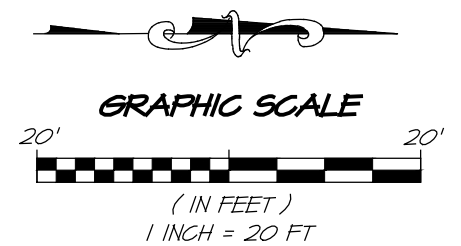
# BREMER FAMILY WINERY - OPTION 2 WIDENING TO EAST AND WEST LEFT TURN CONSTRAINTS EXHIBIT

NAPA COUNTY CALIFORNIA

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# The Ballentine Legacy

*Family*

*History*

*Team*

## Where Our Story Begins

Founded in 1905 and deeply rooted in Napa Valley, Ballentine Vineyards is more than a winery; it's a celebration of a century-old heritage. As a multigenerational, family-owned and operated winery, we pride ourselves on being an enduring symbol of quality, sustainability, and authenticity in Napa Valley.

1883-1895

1905-1912

**1910-1924**

1923 - 1935

1926-1950



## *John J. Ballentine*

### First Generation

John J. Ballentine, Frank Ballentine's paternal grandfather, was an immigrant from Northern Ireland's Tyrone County who came to America at 26 years old by way of the Columbia steamship from Glasgow to New York. He headed West and settled in San Francisco. John worked as an auto mechanic and chauffeur when he married his wife, Marie Carrere, a French dressmaker, in 1914. They had two children, Lorraine (and Robert (1918), whom they raised in St. Helena and remained in the Bay Area for the rest of their lives. In 1922, John purchased the old Sutter Home Winery from Mass and Adelina Ferrero on Howell Mountain. For \$7,150.00 in gold coins, the Ballentines acquired 160 acres of land, winemaking equipment, a mule, a horse, two cows, a dog and a half chickens, and hay in the barn. He renamed it Ballentine's Deer Park Winery after his family's cattle ranch and dairy farm in Ireland. In 1923, his beloved wife Marie passed away.



## *The Fourth Generation*

### Frank Ballentine

The son of Van and Betty Ballentine, Frank Ballentine has seamlessly blended his passion for wine with business acumen, crafting his own major at UC Davis, crowning his academic achievements with an MBA at Fresno State, and continually augments his expertise through executive management programs at Stanford and Harvard. After college, Frank was a winemaker in the San Joaquin Valley and Fresno. Transitioning from winemaking to food manufacturing and distribution, Frank held senior roles at Odwalla during its meteoric growth and currently serves as the President and CEO of GreenLeaf for 25 years, a prominent purveyor of high-quality produce and specialty products. In all of these pursuits, Frank has ceaselessly sought best practices to elevate his family business.

In 2012, Frank joined forces with his aging parents to oversee the Ballentine Vineyards. Here, he rekindled his love for the land and the intricate science of vineyard management with his wife Linda and children Ryan and Audrey by his side. Collaborating closely with Winemaker Bruce Devlin, a shared vision emerged.



*"Walking through the vineyards right before harvest is my favorite time. You can begin to see if your hard work is paying off with the promise of some great wines."*

*~ Frank Ballentine, fourth generation*

For the past decade, Frank and Bruce have embarked on a continuous journey of experimentation with our 100+-year-old vineyards, unlocking their perpetual potential to craft new, exceptional wines annually. Our commitment to sustainability reflects not only a responsibility to the land but also a dedication to embracing the evolving dynamics of the wine industry. As we move forward, we honor our past to shape a future that mirrors the enduring legacy of the Ballentine family, spanning nearly 120 years in Napa Valley.

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Your personal membership to the finest Napa Valley artisan wineries.

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## Bremer Family Winery

Review by [Dave](#) — 2 Comments

### Quick Info

Bremer Family Winery 975 Deer Park Road, St. Helena, CA 94574 Phone: 963-5411  <a href="http://www.bremerfamilywinery.com">www.bremerfamilywinery.com</a>	Hours: 10-5pm daily  Open to Public: No  Appointments: Yes
---	--



Regular Tours: No

**Bremer Family Winery** is a historic winery located on Deer Park Road just minutes from the Silverado Trail and Napa Valley on the slopes of Howell Mountain near the small community of Deer Park. This was the 200th Napa winery that we visited as part of our research for Napa Wine Project; we have since completed more than 1,100 visits, tastings and extensive written reviews of Napa Valley based wineries/producers. The winery building dates from 1891 and is located adjacent to the original stone cellar. The cellar was built into the side of the hill in order to keep aging wines cool and it remains very pleasant even on hot summer days.

For such an “unassuming winery” this property has a rich and often confusing historical background due to names and ownership transitions. In regard to wine growing, the story begins with John and Jacob Sutter; by 1884 John Sutter (no relation to the namesake of Sutter’s Fort) owned 20 acres of land on what is now in the Howell Mountain sub appellation. Just like today’s contemporary wine scene, heirs often get into the wine business. Such was the case with his daughter Caroline (often referred to as Lina) and her husband Emile Leuenberger. In 1891 they purchased land near what is now the tiny community of Deer Park and much later the site of today’s Bremer Family Winery.

The Leuenberger’s soon built a winery here and called it Sutter Home, named in honor of Caroline’s father. Five years after building this winery, they also founded Sutter Home Winery and Distillery in San Francisco and is where they blended and bottled wines made from grapes from their Napa Valley property.

The April 1906 San Francisco earthquake & subsequent fire destroyed their business. Moving their blending and bottling operations to Napa Valley later that same year, they purchased the old Thomann Winery and Distillery just south of St. Helena. Already well established with the name Sutter Home, they immediately renamed their St. Helena property to Sutter Home and prominently painted the name of the winery across the roof of the winery building. It was the Trinchero family who acquired their St. Helena property in the late 1940s and kept the name Sutter Home which they continue to operate today.



But the Leuenberger's original winery in Deer Park was sold and went through several owners including John Ballentine (same family who operates Ballentine Vineyards) who purchased the site in 1922 and reopened operations after the repeal of Prohibition in 1933. He made wines here under the name Deer Park Winery until the 1950s; the Ballentine family eventually sold the property in the late 1970s. Proprietor Bill Ballentine of William Cole Vineyards in St. Helena told us he remembers part of his childhood was spent roaming this property.

After several more owners, winemaking resumed in 1979 headed by winemaker David Clark who began using the property again.



Bremer Family Winery is owned by proprietors John and Laura Bremer; they purchased the site in 2002 and changed the name of the winery at that time. John and Laura used to visit Napa Valley quite often over a span of about 25 years. One day, Laura remarked, "I want to do whatever it takes to never leave this valley" which became the impetus for starting this winery. John used to be involved in mining operations in Southern California including for US Mine Corp and several cement companies, was president of Recy Inc., a sludge composting facility in Corona, CA and was also CEO of Riverside, CA based GroWest Nursery on Growest Ave, now home to Moon Valley Nursery. In Napa, the Bremers were also founding partners of Fumé Bistro & Bar.



The cellar was originally built for smaller production levels in the late 1800s; from 2008 through 2012 the Bremer's drilled a wine cave. The cave encompasses 17,000 square feet which is more than ample space for their extended aging programs and for the most part eliminates the need to stack barrels. Their current production typically ranges between 3,000 and 4,000 cases each year. In 2020, the year of terrible fires, they only produced about 1,000 cases.

While situated below the minimum 1,400-foot elevation of nearby Howell Mountain this site at about 900 feet is just as rocky as a number of Howell Mountain vineyards we have visited. An example of the type of rock can be seen in a side tunnel in the cave which is not covered in gunnite. Thick volcanic compressed ash called tufa runs from the bottom of this section of the cave to the top and during particularly rainy winters, water flows out of this rock into the cave.

In 2020 an application was submitted to the TTB (the branch of the U.S. government that oversees the alcohol industry) to create a new sub appellation within Napa Valley called Crystal Springs. Approved on October 16, 2024, Bremer Family Winery is located within this appellation.

This estate property at the time of their purchase was 47 acres; today 9 acres are planted to vine (Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Zinfandel and Merlot). The Bremer's also own several vineyards on Howell Mountain including off of Las Posadas Road which is a very historical part of Howell Mountain within La Jota Ranch. Total land under their ownership are 110 acres.

On hot days stepping inside the cellar, one will be amazed at how much colder it is inside, as the entrance to their cave is from within the old cellar. Several tasting tables are setup inside the cellar or if weather permits, visitors can taste outside at one of the tables under one of their stately oak trees next to the small and scenic seasonally running creek. This is a long way from some of the noisy, crowded tasting rooms in downtown Napa on Fridays and Saturdays in particular. Visits are personable, casual and unscripted. This picturesque property features a bocce ball court and beautifully landscaped grounds.

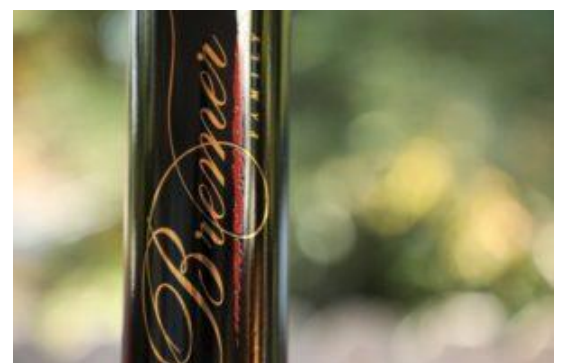
Towards the end of a tasting, visitors are accompanied into the cave passing by a number of old wine making pieces of equipment lining the wall at the cave entrance. These devices were used at one point for filtering, bottling and other niche uses. And still filled bottles labeled Deer Park Winery are also on display here as an homage to the former owners.

Bob Boland (who we first met with) has been Bremer Family Winery's winemaker since they purchased the property; after more than two decades, he is now among some of Napa Valley's longest tenured winemakers at one property. The first vintage bottled under Bremer Family Winery was from 2000 crafted from wines already in barrel prior to the Bremer purchase.

### Select Wines

All of the Bremer Family wines are very much hand crafted; winemaker Bolan used to make wine for at least one other small Howell Mountain producer; today his primary focus is on Bremer Family Winery along with his own small Pinot Noir brand, cleverly named: Bob Bolan Wines.

Their wine making philosophy is one of patience. Their Chardonnay often sees close to 2 years in barrel. Red wines made here are typically aged up to 30 months in barrel with an additional 3 years in the bottle before being released; this is significantly longer than most wineries. These are balanced and approachable bottlings upon release. One wine made available to their wine club was 9 years old at the time of its release, a classic example of the sometimes used phrase, "no wine before its time". Blending decisions often take several months. Bremer Family makes 8 to 12 different types of wines each year.



### *Whites*

The 2020 Bremer Family Winery Chardonnay was aged in 100% oak barrels for 18 months of which 1/3 was in new French oak. It went through full malolactic fermentation but is not a 'buttery' bottling. This wine is medium to deep gold in color; the bouquet is sweetly fruited and offers attractive aromatics of butterscotch, honeycomb, pineapple, apricot, a subtle toasted oak note, dried straw and some tropical florals including jasmine. This highly flavorful bottling features a perceived sweetness of fruit on the palate including notes of apricot, yellow peach and pineapple. There is also pear, white nectarine and some tropical notes including mango, papaya and guava. The palate offers a lightly creamy but not viscous texture which is complemented nicely with a bright acidity. This wine finishes with a lingering note of Golden delicious apple.

The 2012 Bremer Family Chardonnay shows intense tropical aromas including of honeysuckle as well as ripe melon and a graphite/minerality nuance. This is followed by a palate which is creamy with a noticeable velvety softness. The finish is clean, lively and rich. This wine is well-layered and drinks beautifully by itself.

### *Reds*

The 2013 Bremer Family Napa Valley Zinfandel (tasted 10 years post vintage) is medium garnet in color; the bouquet offers a diversity of aromas including most which have become tertiary. It reveals scents of black licorice, old leather, mushroom, bramble, tobacco spice, cooked blackberry, raspberry, lightly toasted bread, dried berries and deeper in the aromatic layering, notes of mocha and espresso. This wine shows flavors of red plum, cherry, dried cranberries, currants and raspberries. It offers plenty of brightness on the finish, mostly red fruited along with fine-grained rounded tannins and light drying but persistent character. The long and somewhat savory finish continues to produce flavor for quite some time and is accompanied by a note of crushed black pepper. This wine still a few years of life ahead of it, but we would drink it sooner than later. And it would pair well with pepperoni pizza or red meat on the BBQ.

Some of their older Cabernet Sauvignons in particular develop well after aging for a few years; these bottlings feature smooth and velvety mouth feels with a pleasing balance between texture, flavor, and acidity. The 2016 Bremer Family Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon is a blend of 93% Cabernet Sauvignon, 6% Cabernet Franc and 1% Petit Verdot. This wine shows very nicely at the time of our tasting 7 years post vintage and was their current release. This bottling is deep ruby; the bouquet offers a ripe sweetly fruited bouquet with notes of chocolate, Graham Cracker and mocha along with aromas of dark plum, blackberry, boysenberry and dark cherry. These aromatics are somewhat mirrored on the palate with a perception of ripe fruits along with licorice, chocolate and a savory and slightly dusty finish including flavors of tobacco spices. The tannins are lightly textured and are well-integrated. This wine drinks wonderfully by itself.

The 2015 Bremer Family Claret is a blend of 54% Cabernet Franc, 40% Cabernet Sauvignon and 6% Merlot. This wine is deep ruby in color; the bouquet is immediately spicy with notes of sweet tobacco



and dried herbs along with ripe Santa Rosa plum and chocolate. The focus here is clearly on the fruit with the barrel aging providing subtle complementary characteristics both on the bouquet and the palate. This is a balanced and easy drinking red wine that offers flavors of plum, blackberry and dark cherry. The lightly grainy tannins are felt more on the front of the palate than the finish. This wine lingers slightly savory accompanied by bright red fruits.



Not many Napa Valley based wineries make port, but Bremer produced for at least one vintage, a white port-style wine (Muscat grapes) and during certain years, a very limited red port-style wine, primarily made from Cabernet Sauvignon grapes. The 2010 Bremer Family Port (tasted 13 years post vintage) is medium garnet in color; the intense bouquet offers a rich union of dessert and baking spices including toffee, caramel, brown sugar, rum raisin, molasses, Bailey's Irish coffee, clove, cardamom, mocha and brown chocolate. But there is plenty of fruit here still including ripe blackberry, boysenberry and a dark cherry liqueur. Smelling this olfactory orgasm reminded us of walking into winemaker Dick Peterson's Christmas tree barn next to his Christmas tree farm on Darms Lane in Yountville many years ago and sampling cider and holiday



cookies. Sometimes aromatics can trigger strong feelings of nostalgia. Equally as intense on the palate, this wine delivers flavors of blackberry, boysenberry jam, dark slightly overripe cherries, black chocolate, brown sugar, cardamom and cloves. This wine's sweetness is tempered somewhat with its bright acidity. It was fortified mid fermentation with Germain Robin brandy. This is 'sailboat wine' or cold winter evenings cuddled on a couch around a wood-burning fire kind of wine.

The 2009 Bremer Family Merlot shows sweet aromatics with notes of baking spice including cinnamon, mocha and toffee. The sweetness of aromas continues onto the palate with a sweetness of fruit (no residual sugar) and flavors of ripe blackberry and plum. This is not a light Merlot; it delivers a complexity and richness of flavor. The finish features moderately gripping tannins.

Bremer Family also produced *Austintatious* for a few years, a wine named after John and Laura's son Austin (a unique red varietal blend).

Bremer Family maintains a fairly extensive library collection of bottlings for sale with vintages available up to 20 years old including a number of large format wines. To have a library collection available like this is a rarity among Napa Valley based wineries. Other than a very limited placement at Carpe Diem Restaurant in Napa the wines are sold direct to consumer through visits, their website and their wine club. For more information, to schedule a visit to the winery (children and pet friendly) or to join their wine club, visit: [www.bremerfamilywinery.com](http://www.bremerfamilywinery.com)

### *Property*



### *Cave/Winery*



### *Old Winemaking*

