

“M”

Public Comment

## Ringel, Matthew

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**From:** MeetingClerk  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 14, 2025 8:32 AM  
**To:** Ringel, Matthew  
**Subject:** FW: Napa County - Notice of Public Hearing

Please see comment below.

Thank you,



A Tradition of Stewardship  
A Commitment to Service

### Aime Ramos

Administrative Secretary I  
Planning, Building, & Environmental Services  
Napa County

**Phone:** 707-2532-4417

1195 Third Street, Suite 210  
Napa, CA 94559

[www.countyofnapa.org](http://www.countyofnapa.org)

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**From:** RICHARD W SVENDSEN <rsvendesen@sbcglobal.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 14, 2025 8:28 AM  
**To:** MeetingClerk <MeetingClerk@countyofnapa.org>  
**Subject:** Re: Napa County - Notice of Public Hearing

[External Email - Use Caution]

This makes NO sense. Wineries play this game and appear to get easy approval for a small winery and come back 5 years later and request a major modification! Enough wineries and tasting rooms in this valley!

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 14, 2025, at 8:20 AM, MeetingClerk <[MeetingClerk@countyofnapa.org](mailto:MeetingClerk@countyofnapa.org)> wrote:

*ARROW AND BRANCH WINERY MAJOR MODIFICATION – P23-00057*

<image002.png>

### Napa County - Meeting Clerk - AR

Planning, Building, & Environmental Services  
Napa County

**Phone:** 707-253-4417

Email: [meetingclerk@countyofnapa.org](mailto:meetingclerk@countyofnapa.org)

1195 Third Street, Suite 210

<P23-00057-MOD Arrow and Branch Major Modification Public Notice (1).pdf>

**From:** [LONNIE ROBINSON](#)  
**To:** [Ringel, Matthew](#)  
**Subject:** Arrow and Branch Winery - Use Permit Major Modification (P23-00057-MOD)  
**Date:** Saturday, August 23, 2025 8:32:38 AM

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[External Email - Use Caution]

I am a nearby neighbor of this winery and my wife and I are in complete support of the modifications they are requesting to their use permit. It will enhance the whole Oak Knoll area. This winery is definitely a hidden gem in the Napa region. Please approve all requests in the application.

Sincerely,

Anna and Lonnie Robinson  
5253 Solano Ave  
Napa, CA 94558  
510-772-4125

**From:** [D.M](#)  
**To:** [Ringel, Matthew](#)  
**Subject:** Project P23-00057-MOD  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 3, 2025 9:35:08 AM

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[External Email - Use Caution]

Hello Matthew,

I am writing today in support of the modification of the Arrow and Branch Winery in the Oak Knoll District.

I am a grower in the Oak Knoll District and a close neighbor to the Arrow and Branch property. I believe the major modification of the winery to increase production, visitation, and expansion will add significant value to our area of the Napa Valley.

During these difficult times, it is important to support our fellow grapegrowers and their willingness to enhance their facilities for future generations to come.

Thank you,  
Dayna Manning  
Bee Creek Vineyards  
3099 Dry Creek Road  
Napa, California

**From:** [David Jessup](#)  
**To:** [Ringel, Matthew](#)  
**Subject:** Arrow & Branch Winery- User Permit Major Modifications  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 3, 2025 12:16:17 PM  
**Attachments:** [P23-00057-MOD Arrow and Branch Major Modification Public Notice \(1\).pdf](#)

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[External Email - Use Caution]

Good afternoon, Matthew,

I am writing you a letter to show our support from Senza Hotel in Napa for the Arrow & Branch Winery Use permit modifications. As you are aware, the wine industry is down significantly, and these modifications are essential for their business to sustain and grow during these challenging times. They have been wonderful neighbors and will potentially offer an exciting premium winery experience to this area. Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,

David Jessup  
General Manager  
Senza Hotel



**David Jessup**  
General Manager  
SENZA HOTEL  
(707) 253-0337 ext. 205  
[SENZAHOTEL.COM](http://SENZAHOTEL.COM)



State of California – Natural Resources Agency  
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE  
Bay Delta Region  
2825 Cordelia Road, Suite 100  
Fairfield, CA 94534  
(707) 428-2002  
[www.wildlife.ca.gov](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov)

**GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor**  
**CHARLTON H. BONHAM, Director**



September 8, 2025

Matt Ringel, Planner III  
Napa County  
1195 Third Street  
Napa, CA 94559  
[Matthew.Ringel@countyofnapa.org](mailto:Matthew.Ringel@countyofnapa.org)

Subject: Arrow and Branch Winery, Use Permit Major Modification (P23-00057-MOD),  
Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration, SCH No. 2025080635,  
Napa County

Dear Mr. Ringel:

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) received an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) from Napa County (County) for the Arrow and Branch Winery, Use Permit Major Modification (P23-00057-MOD) (Project) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and CEQA Guidelines.

CDFW is submitting comments on the IS/MND to inform the County, as the Lead Agency, of potentially significant impacts to biological resources associated with the Project.

### **CDFW ROLE**

CDFW is a **Trustee Agency** with responsibility under CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15386 for commenting on projects that could impact fish, plant, and wildlife resources. CDFW is also considered a **Responsible Agency** if a project would require discretionary approval, such as permits issued under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA), the Lake or Streambed Alteration (LSA) Program, or other provisions of the Fish and Game Code that afford protection to the state's fish and wildlife trust resources.

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION SUMMARY**

**Proponent:** Steven Contursi, Property Owner

**Objective:** The Project would entail further development of an existing winery facility with modifications to an existing Use Permit, including:

- A. Increase annual production capacity from 30,000 gallons per year to 45,000 gallons per year;

Matt Ringel  
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- B. Expansion of an existing winery building by adding approximately 3,529 square feet of additional production space and conversion of approximately 1,721 square feet of space for accessory uses to production space, totaling 13,797 square feet of production space, and construction of approximately 4,308 square feet for additional accessory uses, totaling 4,687 square feet for accessory uses;
- C. Excavation of approximately 1,500 cubic yards of spoils associated with the construction of proposed structural pads and exterior improvements;
- D. Relocation of on-site parking (no change in number of parking spaces);
- E. On-site domestic and process wastewater treatment systems, including the installation of an approximately 81,000-gallon process water storage tank; and
- F. Landscaping, and other improvements associated with wineries.

**Location:** The 10.09-acre project site is located on Assessor's Parcel Number 034-190-040-000; at approximately 38.36273°N, -122.34122°W; 5215 Solano Avenue, in the City of Napa, CA 94558; County of Napa.

## REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

### Lake and Streambed Alteration

An LSA Notification, pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 1600 et. seq. is required for Project activities affecting lakes or streams and associated riparian habitat. Notification is required for any activity that will substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow; change or use material from the bed, channel, or bank including associated riparian or wetland resources; or deposit or dispose of material where it may pass into a river, lake or stream. **The Project has the potential to impact Dry Creek, therefore an LSA Notification may be required as further described below.** Work within streams and riparian areas are subject to LSA notification requirements. CDFW, as a Responsible Agency under CEQA, would consider the CEQA document for the Project and may issue an LSA Agreement. CDFW may not execute the final LSA Agreement until it has complied with CEQA as a Responsible Agency.

## COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CDFW offers the comments and recommendations below to assist the County in adequately identifying and/or mitigating the Project's significant, or potentially significant, direct and indirect impacts on fish and wildlife (biological) resources. Based on the Project's avoidance of significant impacts on biological resources with implementation of mitigation measures, including those CDFW recommends below and

Matt Ringel  
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included in **Attachment 1** Draft Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, CDFW concludes that an MND is appropriate for the Project.

### **Mitigation Measure Related Impact Shortcoming**

***Would the Project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by CDFW or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?***

#### **COMMENT 1:** Stream Alteration

**Issue:** The IS/MND Mitigation Measure BIO-5, Riparian Protection, indicates that the Project would avoid impacts to stream and riparian habitat, however it also includes the following statement:

*“All construction and related traffic shall remain outside of the protective fencing to the maximum extent practicable [emphasis added] to ensure that the stream, buffer zones, and associated woodland habitat remains undisturbed.”*

Including “to the maximum extent practicable” in the mitigation measure provides the option for the Project to impact stream and riparian habitat, which could result in significant impacts to Dry Creek.

**Recommended Mitigation Measure:** To comply with Fish and Game Code section 1600 et seq. and reduce impacts to riparian habitat to less-than-significant, CDFW recommends that MM BIO-5 remove the “to the maximum extent practicable” language. Alternatively, add the following requirement to MM BIO-5.

If impacts to the bed, bank, channel, or riparian area of any stream cannot be completely avoided, the Project shall notify CDFW for Project impacts to the stream. More information for the notification process is available at <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Environmental-Review/LSA>. The Project shall comply with all measures of the Streambed Alteration Agreement (SAA), if issued, and shall not commence activities with potential to impact the stream until the SAA process has been completed. Restoration to mitigate impacts to the stream shall include a qualified biologist preparing and implementing a restoration plan including, but not limited to success criteria, a minimum of five years of monitoring and maintenance, and achieving success criteria, unless otherwise approved in writing by CDFW.

Please be advised that a SAA, if issued for the Project, would likely include the above recommended mitigation measures, as applicable, and may include additional measures to protect fish and wildlife resources.

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## ENVIRONMENTAL DATA

CEQA requires that information developed in environmental impact reports and negative declarations be incorporated into a database which may be used to make subsequent or supplemental environmental determinations. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21003, subd. (e).) Accordingly, please report any special-status species and natural communities detected during Project surveys to California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB). The CNDDDB field survey form can be filled out and submitted online at the following link: <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDDB/Submitting-Data>. The types of information reported to CNDDDB can be found at the following link: <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDDB/Plants-and-Animals>.

## ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT FILING FEES

The Project, as proposed, would have an impact on fish and/or wildlife, and assessment of environmental document filing fees is necessary. Fees are payable upon filing of the Notice of Determination by the Lead Agency and serve to help defray the cost of environmental review by CDFW. Payment of the environmental document filing fee is required in order for the underlying project approval to be operative, vested, and final. (Cal. Code Regs, tit. 14, § 753.5; Fish & G. Code, § 711.4; Pub. Resources Code, § 21089.)

## CONCLUSION

CDFW appreciates the opportunity to comment on the IS/MND to assist the County in identifying and mitigating Project impacts on biological resources.

Questions regarding this letter or further coordination should be directed to Nicholas Magnuson, Environmental Scientist, at (707) 815-4166 or [Nicholas.Magnuson@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:Nicholas.Magnuson@wildlife.ca.gov); or Melanie Day, Senior Environmental Scientist (Supervisory), at (707) 210-4415 or [Melanie.Day@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:Melanie.Day@wildlife.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:  
*Erin Chappell*  
Erin Chappell  
Regional Manager  
Bay Delta Region

**Attachment 1:** Draft Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

ec: Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (SCH No. 2025080635)

Matt Ringel  
 Napa County  
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**ATTACHMENT 1**

**Draft Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP)**

CDFW provides the following language to be incorporated into the MMRP for the Project.

<b>Biological Resources (BIO)</b>			
<b>Mitigation Measure (MM)</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
<b>BIO-5</b>	<p>Remove the “to the maximum extent practicable” language. Alternatively, add the following requirement to MM BIO-5.</p> <p>If impacts to the bed, bank, channel, or riparian area of the stream cannot be completely avoided, the Project shall notify CDFW for Project impacts to the stream. More information for the notification process is available at <a href="https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Environmental-Review/LSA">https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Environmental-Review/LSA</a>. The Project shall comply with all measures of the SAA, if issued, and shall not commence activities with potential to impact the stream until the SAA process has been completed.</p> <p>Restoration to mitigate impacts to the stream shall include a qualified biologist preparing and implementing a restoration plan including, but not limited to success criteria, a minimum of five years of monitoring and maintenance, and achieving success criteria, unless otherwise approved in writing by CDFW.</p>	<p>Prior to Ground Disturbance</p>	<p>Project Applicant</p>

## Ringel, Matthew

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**From:** Gina Capiaux <gina@capiauxcellars.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, September 8, 2025 3:16 PM  
**To:** Ringel, Matthew  
**Cc:** Seanne Contursi; Steve Contursi; Sean Capiaux  
**Subject:** Arrow and Branch Winery - Letter of Support for Use Permit Major Modification (P23-00057-MOD)  
**Attachments:** Capiaux Support Letter for Arrow and Branch Winery.pdf

[External Email - Use Caution]

Hi Matt,

Please find attached my letter of support for the major modifications to Arrow and Branch winery.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me directly.

--

**Gina Capiaux, PhD**  
GMC Regulatory Consulting, LLC  
[gina@capiauxcellars.com](mailto:gina@capiauxcellars.com)  
707 815-4030

September 8, 2025

Mr. Matt Ringel  
Dept. of Planning, Building & Environmental Services  
Napa County  
1195 Third Street, Suite 210  
Napa, CA 94559

SUBJECT: Letter in Support of Use Permit Major Modification (P23-00057-MOD)

Dear Mr. Ringel:

I am writing to express my support for the proposed modifications to the use permit for Arrow and Branch Winery to allow reasonable increases in production, wine tastings, and the winery building located at 5215 Solano Ave. I am a homeowner located at 5127 Solano Ave with a direct view of the winery and operations from our property.

This is a small, family-owned operation that is emblematic of the Napa Valley's winemaking heritage and character. The proposed modifications reflect thoughtful growth that remains true to our regional identity. The winery's scale is appropriate for the surrounding rural residential parcels. The modifications are designed to maintain compatibility with nearby land uses while allowing prudent, small-scale expansion or adjustments as permitted by the permit.

I believe the owners will continue to be good stewards of the land and conscientious neighbors, maintaining environmental integrity, safety, and respectful operations within the community.

I respectfully urge the Planning Commission to approve the proposed modifications. The changes represent a sensitive treatment of the land and are aligned with the County's policies and regulations for wineries, supporting sustainable use of agricultural resources while preserving neighborhood quality of life.

Please feel free to contact me if you require any additional information or testimony.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,



Gina Capiaux, PhD  
gina@capiauxcellars.com

## Ringel, Matthew

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**From:** Sean Capioux <sean@oshaughnessywinery.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, September 8, 2025 1:49 PM  
**To:** Ringel, Matthew  
**Cc:** Seanne Contursi; Steve Contursi; gina@capiouxcellars.com  
**Subject:** Arrow and Branch Winery - Use Permit Major Modification (P23-00057-MOD)  
**Attachments:** Arrow & Branch support letter.docx

[External Email – Use Caution]

Hello Matt,  
Please find attached my letter of support for the major modifications to Arrow and Branch winery.  
If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me directly.

*Sean Capioux  
President/Director of Winemaking  
O'Shaughnessy Estate Winery  
PO Box 923 Angwin, CA 94508  
707-965-2898 phone  
707-965-3010 fax*



O'SHAUGHNESSY  
ESTATE WINERY

September 8, 2025

Mr. Matt Ringel  
Dept. of Planning, Building & Environmental Services  
Napa County  
1195 Third Street, Suite 210  
Napa, CA 94559

SUBJECT: Support of Use Permit Major Modification (P23-00057-MOD)

Dear Mr. Ringel:

I am writing as a neighbor and Industry veteran in support of the Arrow and Branch winery located at 5215 Solano Ave, my family lives at 5127 Solano Ave and looks directly at the Arrow and Branch winery from our back yard.

As the president of another small family-owned winery, O'Shaughnessy Estate winery, for the past 26 years, I enthusiastically appreciate the growth of this winery and other small family wineries located throughout the Napa Valley. The ownership at Arrow and Branch have been good neighbors and involved in our local community. I believe that their winery will be an asset to the Oak Knoll area. Increase in production and visitation for small wineries is essential to keep pace with the increased cost of doing business in the Valley.

In short, I am supportive of this proposal and believe that the Arrow and Branch Winery will be a good neighbor and a good steward of the land.

Sincerely,

Sean Capiaux  
President / Director of Winemaking  
O'Shaughnessy Estate Winery

## Ringel, Matthew

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**From:** Suzanne Groth <SGroth@grothwines.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 11, 2025 10:49 AM  
**To:** Ringel, Matthew  
**Cc:** sallyvazirirealtor@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Objection from Groth Vineyards & Winery regarding hearing for Arrow and Branch Winery Use Permit Major Modification(P23-00057-MOD)  
**Attachments:** Arrow and Branch Winery-Use Permit Major Modification-Groth.docx; Screenshot 2025-08-19 135931-OKD event at Arrow and Branch.png

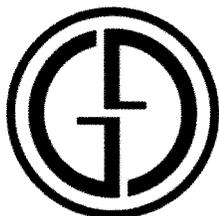
[External Email - Use Caution]

Hello Matthew,

Enclosed please find my document of objection to the request from Arrow and Branch Winery for a Use Permit Major Modification(P23-00057-MOD). I've also enclosed a screenshot of an email I received from the Oak Knoll District. This event was held August 19<sup>th</sup> of 2025 and is a code violation of Arrow and Branch's current use permit.

Sincerely,

Suzanne



ROOTED IN OAKVILLE

SUZANNE GROTH

*President and CEO*

P: 707.754.4244

GROTH VINEYARDS & WINERY

750 Oakville Cross Road

Oakville, CA 94562

[Grothwines.com](http://Grothwines.com)

[FACEBOOK](#) | [INSTAGRAM](#)

# COMMENTS REGARDING ARROW AND BRANCH WINERY-Use Permit Major Modification, September 17, 2025

To: Planning Commission of Napa County

Regarding Use Permit Major Modification(P23-00057-MOD), Planning Commission meeting of September 17, 2025

Cc: Matt Ringel, Napa County Planning

I am Suzanne Groth, President and CEO of Groth Vineyards & Winery (GVW), located at 750 Oakville Cross Road, Oakville, Ca. GVW's primary operation is in Oakville where our winery is located. We also own 44 acres of vineyard on three parcels farmed in the area between Darms Lane on the south and Hillview Lane on the North. My residence, built in 2003, is at 1090 Darms Lane built on one of the parcels owned by GVW.

I have some objections to this project.

**1. Arrow and Branch is applying for a major modification less than two years after receiving approval for the current winery building.**

This project has barely been completed as originally proposed and approved. It seems that the owners, are hoping to expand their use permit to what they were originally hoping to get approved. Fearing that a larger and noisier winery in a residential neighborhood would be rejected by the county and neighbors it seems their strategy is to apply for multiple major modifications to achieve their desired winery size. This is a 10.1 acre parcel and barely meets the minimum requirements of buildable lot. It is also located directly on the bank of Dry Creek, a blue line stream, and is already encroaching the stream setback. I'm surprised that this structure was already approved on this site when the winery could have been located further away from Dry Creek and the three residences that are directly impacted by the sites and sounds of this winery.

Now the owners of this project want to significantly increase the nature of their operations without operating even one harvest cycle at this location. What basis do they have for increasing winemaking and visitors when they have little or no experience running this facility as is? Have they filled the tasting room, have they already run out of storage for crush capacity utilizing their current permits? I would like to see them operate legally for 5 years before granting Arrow and Branch additional permitting for this site.

**2. Proposed expansion of outdoor entertainment space/covered terrace for wine tasting on Dry Creek.**

The current structure already butts up against the legal set back from Dry Creek. By proposing additional entertainment space on the north side of this building Arrow and Branch would add more concrete and create more water run-off into the creek. I'm very surprised Napa County already approved this structure being built this close to Dry Creek in the first place. I propose that if any outdoor space is permitted, it be located away from the creek and the 3 neighboring properties located very close by, across Dry Creek.

## COMMENTS REGARDING ARROW AND BRANCH WINERY-Use Permit Major Modification, September 17, 2025

### 3. The Environmental Noise Assessment needs a closer look.

#### Marketing Event Noise

The current level of visitors (15 per day proposed 34 per day) is already causing ambient noise and disturbance of the neighbors. If Arrow and Branch succeeds in getting permission for double it's current visitors and the extension of its 'covered terrace with outdoor tasting' they will likely quickly exceed the decibels that are outlined in the noise assessment. Even 'background music' during busy weekends will diminish the enjoyment of the closest neighbors and make it less desirable for them to use their own outdoor space during tasting room hours.

### 4. Already breaking the current use permit.

Despite the current guidelines of no more than 125 people 1 x per year with no amplified music outdoors, this winery has already attempted to host such an event in excess of its permitted activities. On July 28, 2025 I received an email from the Oak Knoll District, I was invited to attend an event on August 1 from 4-7 , 2025 celebrating the Oak Knoll District with a catered dinner and advertising a band, The Growler Brothers(screenshot of event invite attached). When I clicked the link I noticed that there were 113 tickets remaining for sale on the website but it indicated that there was no limit to how many people could attend. There was no requirement that you be a member of the Oak Knoll District and you were invited to 'bring a neighbor.' When my neighbor, Sally Vazziri-1057 Darms Lane, inquired to Mark Wight, Napa County Code Compliance Officer if this was permitted activity for their use permit he did reach out and question Arrow and Branch advising them of the allowed 60 person limits of their permit. My understanding is that Arrow and Branch were informed by Mr. Wight that this was a code violation. It seems that Arrow and Branch is seeking more of such permitted activities confirming my suspicion that they are more interested in processing visitors than grapes.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Groth,

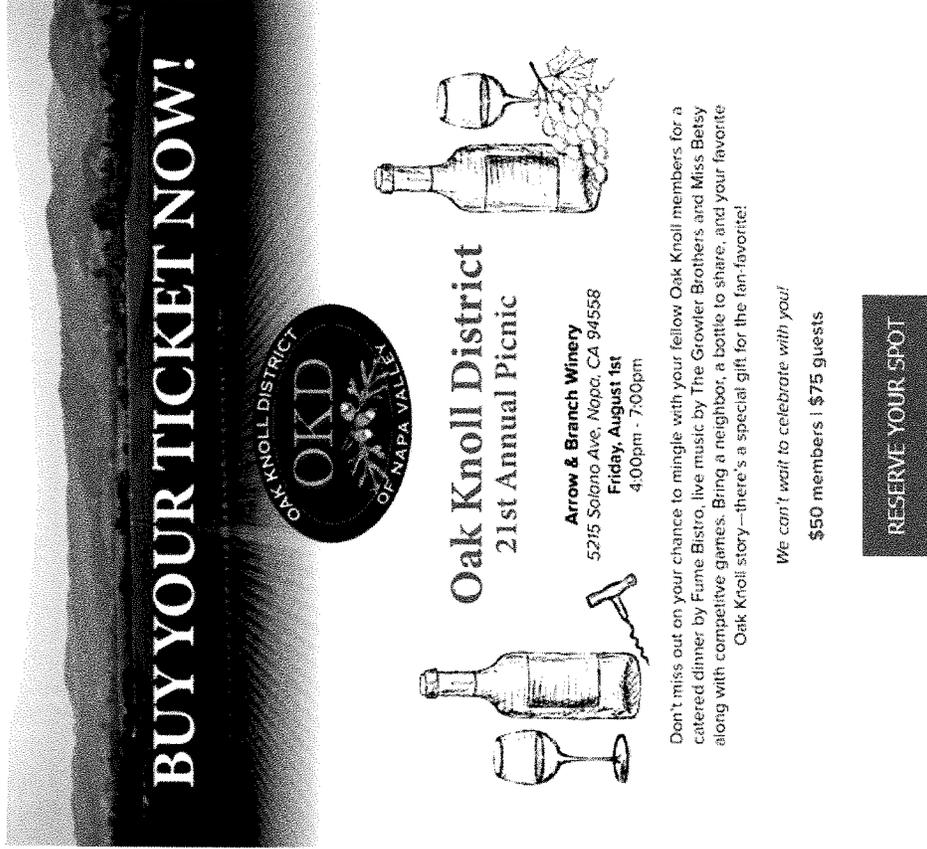
President & CEO, Groth Vineyards & Winery

\*Resident of 1090 Darms Lane, Napa CA

707-944-0290, [sgroth@grothwines.com](mailto:sgroth@grothwines.com)

c is around the corner!

in the corner!

**BUY YOUR TICKET NOW!**



**Oak Knoll District  
21st Annual Picnic**

**Arrow & Branch Winery**  
5215 Solano Ave, Napa, CA 94558  
Friday, August 1st  
4:00pm - 7:00pm

Don't miss out on your chance to mingle with your fellow Oak Knoll members for a catered dinner by Fume Bistro, live music by The Growler Brothers and Miss Betsy along with competitive games. Bring a neighbor, a bottle to share, and your favorite Oak Knoll story—there's a special gift for the fan-favorite!

*We can't wait to celebrate with you!*  
**\$50 members | \$75 guests**

**RESERVE YOUR SPOT**



# HUNTER GLENN

Matt Ringel  
Dept. of Planning, Building & Environmental Services  
Napa County  
1195 Third Street, Suite 210  
Napa, CA 94559

RE: Arrow and Branch Winery - Use Permit Major Modification (P23-00057-MOD)

Dear Mr. Ringel,

As neighboring winery owners in the Oak Knoll AVA, we write in strong support of the Arrow and Branch Winery's proposed use permit modification for their property at 5215 Solano Avenue.

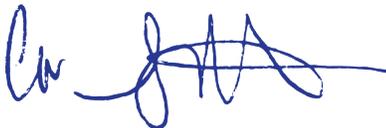
Arrow and Branch represents the quintessential small family winery that has long defined Napa Valley's character and heritage. In an era where family-owned operations face increasing pressures, supporting enterprises like the Contursis' reflects our commitment to preserving the authentic agricultural legacy that distinguishes our region.

The proposed expansion demonstrates thoughtful planning that respects both the property's scale and the surrounding rural residential character. The modifications are appropriately sized for the existing operation and maintain compatibility with neighboring land uses, ensuring the pastoral integrity of our community remains intact.

Our personal interactions with the Contursi family have consistently demonstrated their commitment to responsible land stewardship and neighborly collaboration. Their genuine dedication to sustainable practices and community welfare positions them as exemplary custodians of our shared landscape.

We respectfully urge the Planning Commission to approve this modification. The proposal represents a sensitive treatment of the land while maintaining full compliance with the County's winery policies and regulations. Supporting this thoughtfully planned expansion serves both the applicants' legitimate business needs and our collective interest in sustaining Napa Valley's distinctive agricultural character.

Sincerely,



Caroline Shifflett

**From:** [Steven Taddei](#)  
**To:** [Ringel, Matthew](#)  
**Subject:** Arrow & Branch Modifications - Permit P23-00057-MOD  
**Date:** Thursday, September 11, 2025 8:25:44 PM

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[External Email - Use Caution]

Dear Mr. Ringel,

My family & I have been residents at 1073 Darms Lane since 1962 and are proud of the history of the lane and the collective stewardship of our unique properties. We feel that the qualities of Darms Lane, its future as a serene neighborhood, the integrity of the local environment - water, birds, native plants, free of noise pollution & free of excessive traffic - are compromised by the proposed expansion of Arrow & Branch.

In its initial phase the Arrow & Branch winery construction disrupted the peace, privacy, and property values of the homes on Darms Lane. The current expansion proposal will continue to jeopardize the neighborhood with greater noise, more traffic, and privacy intrusions.

We are gravely concerned about the potential 65-78% expansion of Arrow & Branch's buildings. Key concerns include:

- The two-story hospitality building with windows facing directly into neighbors' homes, patios, and pools.
- Production increase from 30,000 to 45,000 gallons.
- A 1,573 sq ft barrel room and new fermentation areas along the creek.
- A 700 sq ft balcony overlooking private properties.
- Daily operations (7 days a week, 10:00am – 6:00pm) bringing more visitors, staff, and events than originally approved.
- A second well and 81,000-gallon water tank threatening water security.
- At least 18 months of construction.
- Permanent loss of privacy, quiet, and property values.

Unfortunately, my wife & I will be unable to attend the September 17 public meeting to discuss and raise objections to the proposed Arrow & Branch expansion. Please consider our comments and objections described in this email when making your determination about this project.

Regards,

Steven Taddei & Chrisanne Beebe  
1073 Darms Lane

**From:** [Dina Falk](#)  
**To:** [Ringel, Matthew](#)  
**Cc:** [Wight, Mark](#)  
**Subject:** Arrow & Branch Commentary  
**Date:** Thursday, September 11, 2025 2:52:00 PM

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[External Email - Use Caution]

Dear Matt,

For 2 years we suffered the disturbances of Arrow and Branch's winery construction. The dust, dirt, men yelling and swearing at one another, trucks, back up beeping beginning at 7am in the morning and lasting throughout the day, blasting their music, etc. The list goes on. It was incredibly stressful to say the least and introduced concerns for our health and welfare. We had every reason to believe construction was complete (except for the fact that we still look at a line up of trucks parked on our side of the building each and every day). When we received your notice that a whopping **65% expansion of the existing buildings** is on the agenda for approval (a 78% expansion if you include the outdoor terraces) we were dismayed. As I am writing you this, we can hear backup beeping from a truck at the winery not to mention the flow of oversized black SUV's, Mini busses or Vans sitting in the hammer head turn around directly across from us. Is that even allowed?

Two parties that we later found out were code violations have already taken place. If you weren't advised about the party on June 14th, we would like to report that event. It happened midday, lasted about 2.5-3 hours, there was a singer/guitarist with amplifier and more than 60 people there for a catered lunch with passed appetizers. Hard to know exactly how many people were there because some were inside the building. At the time, we were not aware this was a code violation.

Arrow & Branch purchased 10 acres of land. We implore the planning and building committee to deny this proposal or at least require Arrow & Branch to come up with a way to redesign and downsize this project to the south side so we are not so directly impacted.

Here are some of specific concerns regarding of the 7,837 sq ft building proposal:

1. A two-story "hospitality" building at the west end of the existing structure even higher than the tallest one on the property now. The existing structure already looms over us, obstructs our previously beautiful vineyard views. The proposed building has 6 windows that directly face our swimming pool, outdoor dining area, entertainment patio and home. We welcome you to come over and see for yourself just how close the existing structure is to us, and reconsider what it would look like if this passes.
2. The proposed barrel room of 1,573 sq along the bank of the creek facing the Falk & Vaziri properties. It is hard to believe they can even build this within the setback but there is no doubt the feeling of being encroached upon will become even more severe given the location. If you don't allow the increase in production, surely there would be no need for a secondary barrel room.
3. 700 sq foot entertainment balcony accessible from stairways inside and outside of the

building. From up there, visitors would have a Birdseye view of us in the pool, sitting on the patio, working in the yard or entertaining friends. We would hear every word spoken and vice versa. The balcony is something we vehemently oppose and believe should be removed from the plan.

4. In addition to our concerns about an increase in visitors, staffing and events, the winery wishes to operate **7 days a week from 10am to 6pm**. That would leave us with zero days of respite to look forward to. We request that the days and hours of operation, staffing and events reflect the fact that homes surround this property and we all enjoy a little peace and quiet.

5. Covered terrace and terrace expansion. Again, MAJOR privacy concerns as the winery's entertainment areas are all in line with our view corridor and are in such close proximity to neighboring homes that we/they can hear everything people outside are saying to one another.

6. Increase in staffing, visitors and events. They asked for more staff, visitors and events before and they were denied. Why would the committee change it's mind on this?

7. A secondary Well across from the Ringstad and Patrono properties. We know 4 homes on Darms who have recently dug a well. Doesn't this take water away from the expensive wells?

8. Production increase from 30,000 to 45,000 gallons and new fermentation areas. Again, disrupting our lives with all the additional noise and activity at the winery. The winery initially asked for what they needed to start a working business and should not be asking for more. More productions equals more noise and equipment.

9. 81,000 gallon water storage tank across from the Ringstad property. I am sure you will be hearing from them, but is this really necessary?

10. We realize this is an indeterminate number, but we expect significant reductions in our home value due to the lack of privacy, increased noise and removal of precious vineyard views.

11. We have concerns about additional lighting that will be added if any portion of this proposal is approved. They already have bright lights on the back side of the building facing us and string lights to the west. These are on during most of the night (if not all night). We request that these lights be dimmed and put on a timer at a minimum.

Finally, Arrow and Branch was approved to build an enormous winery, right along the creek as close to us as possible without any input from the neighbors. Now they are submitting a request for 78% more. What has changed between now and their first submission? The building that sits there now now is what we sincerely hope is the finished product. Enough is enough. Please deny this proposal and protect the property owners on Darms Lane.

Thank you in advance for your consideration,

Bill & Dina Falk



**From:** [Bob Ringstad](#)  
**To:** [Ringel, Matthew](#)  
**Cc:** [Brunzell, Kara](#); [Dameron, Megan](#); [Brooks, Walter](#); [Williams, Molly](#); [Richmond, Pete](#); [Dina Falk](#); [Sally Vaziri](#)  
**Subject:** Arrow and Branch Winery - Use Permit Major Modification (P23-00057-MOD)  
**Date:** Monday, September 15, 2025 1:35:30 AM  
**Attachments:** [Video.mov](#)  
[Arrow and Branch Comment Letter CEQA inconsistent.pdf](#)

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[External Email - Use Caution]

Mr. Ringle,

We are residents of Napa County living on Darms Lane. Attached is a letter containing our comments on the Arrow and Branch Winery Major Modification (P23-00057-MOD) as you requested. We believe there are multiple issues with the application including, but not limited to, placement of this facility at minimum setbacks to a Significant Stream which provides spawning habitat for salmon. In addition, the CEQA requirements have not been met and a full EIR is required.

Please confirm your receipt of this email, the attached comment letter, and the attached video showing the spawning salmon in Dry Creek just this past November in a portion of the creek adjacent to the proposed 81,000 gallon waste water holding tank.

We cannot attend the hearing on Wednesday the 17th but are available via phone and email to respond to any questions you have re: our comments.

Respectfully,

Robert Ringstad  
Alicia Ringstad  
707-320-8606

**Robert and Alicia Ringstad**

1088 Darms Lane

Napa, CA 94558

[Bobringstad@gmail.com](mailto:Bobringstad@gmail.com) 707-320-8606

September 15, 2025

Matt Ringel, Planner III

Napa County Planning, Building & Environmental Services

1195 Third Street, Suite 210

Napa, CA 94559

[matthew.ringel@countyofnapa.org](mailto:matthew.ringel@countyofnapa.org)

**Re: Arrow & Branch Winery Major Modification – Use Permit #P23-00057-MOD  
Request for Denial of Application or, at Minimum, Preparation of a Full Environmental  
Impact Report**

Dear Mr. Ringel:

We are residents of the Darms Lane neighborhood and submit these comments opposing the proposed Arrow & Branch Winery (A&B Winery) Major Modification and the accompanying Initial Study–Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS-MND). We are not attorneys and have done our best to interpret the relevant rules and regulations; please allow us some latitude if there are minor errors in citation. As proposed, there are significant negative impacts to the surrounding neighbors, material land-use concerns under Napa County’s Agricultural Preserve policies, and the IS-MND does not appear to satisfy the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). We respectfully request the County deny the application. At minimum, a full Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is required.

**1) Neighborhood Impacts (Noise, Traffic, Quality of Life)**

We fully acknowledge that living in the Agricultural Preserve includes normal farming and vineyard activities—cultivation, pruning, replanting, harvest activities, frost-protection fans, etc. Those are part of the rural character we value.

However, the modification would substantially intensify visitor traffic, event activity, and production operations well beyond what has surrounded the neighborhood for many years. The

cumulative effect of the proposed major modification—along with other development activity in proximity to the A&B Winery—is increased noise, traffic, lighting, and loss of privacy for residences that predate the winery, with likely adverse effects on property values and neighborhood character.

On September 12, 2025, Napa County issued a “Reported or Apparent Code Violation” regarding an A&B Winery marketing event that, as planned, exceeded the limitations of its current use permit. In addition, the use of amplified music outside of the facility violated its permit. Demonstrated disregard for the conditions of approval is a compelling reason not to increase the size and frequency of such events.

## **2) Other Significant Issues Requiring an EIR**

### **A. Biological Resources – Salmonids in Dry Creek**

Dry Creek forms the site’s northern boundary and is a County-designated Significant Stream. The IS-MND and its supporting biological reports omit analysis of Chinook salmon and other anadromous fish, despite Dry Creek’s connection to the Napa River system and observations of spawning use. We have video recordings of Chinook salmon spawning in the creek last November in front of the proposed expansion and we are attaching the video to this email. Our neighbor, Armond Patrino, also saw spawning salmon behind his house last November, as he has many times over 30+ years of living on Dry Creek. Consistent with CEQA Guidelines §§15064 and 15126.2, the analysis must address all potentially significant biological effects, including effects on anadromous salmonids in Dry Creek (e.g., Chinook salmon) and other sensitive species meeting §15380 criteria, and must consider feasible, enforceable mitigation (§15126.4).

### **B. Hydrology / Wastewater – Foreseeable Accident Risk**

The project adds an 81,000-gallon process-water tank and targets production increases even though the wastewater analysis shows peak process flows that meet or exceed the permitted dispersal capacity. Storing and handling large volumes of winery wastewater immediately adjacent to a Significant Stream presents a reasonably foreseeable accident (overflow, leak, storm-event bypass) that could degrade salmonid habitat—an impact the IS-MND does not adequately analyze (Guidelines §15064).

### **C. Cumulative Impacts – Oak Knoll Hotel & Silenus / Ideology Cellars Winery**

CEQA requires evaluation of cumulative noise and traffic from past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects. The Oak Knoll Hotel, currently under construction, lies approximately 0.57 miles from Arrow & Branch and its certified EIR identifies substantial noise/traffic considerations. The adjacent Silenus / Ideology Cellars Winery contributes traffic and noise from production and marketing activities. The IS-MND does not analyze the combined effects of these concurrent visitor-serving uses—especially during harvest season, when all operate at peak intensity. These cumulative effects must be analyzed and appropriate mitigation measures must be addressed if required.

#### **D. Water Availability & Groundwater (Exhibits E and F)**

The project is on the Napa Valley Floor, where the County applies a reduced Water Use Screening Criterion of 0.3 acre-feet per acre per year; because existing use already exceeds 0.3, the applicable test is no net increase from the baseline. Exhibit E calculates a combined existing groundwater use of approximately 9.33 acre-feet per year (Arrow & Branch plus the Silenus/Ideology easement well) and proposes to maintain no net increase at that level using process-wastewater recycling. While this approach meets the screening policy on paper, the claimed offset lacks detailed engineering design, enforceable monitoring, and dry-year reliability analysis, leaving uncertainty as to whether the offset will consistently materialize when needed.

Exhibit F (Tier III) evaluates groundwater–surface water interaction and concludes the Project and Easement Wells are not hydraulically connected to Dry Creek and therefore will not directly affect creek flows. Even accepting that conclusion, an EIR is still warranted to establish performance-based monitoring and triggers (e.g., groundwater levels, offset volumes, and seasonal creek conditions) and to analyze cumulative demand with the adjacent easement well under dry-year conditions, so that any unforeseen effects on the seasonally connected shallow alluvium and Dry Creek are detected and corrected in real time.

#### **E. Tier 2 Well-Interference Trigger (500-Foot Proximity)**

Exhibit F's Cross-Section A–A' (Figure 5) plots the Project Well (WCR 2020-002111) and several nearby off-site wells by well-log ID. Although owner names are not shown, the adjacent parcel APN 034-212-010 (Patrino) appears to contain a domestic well within approximately 500 feet of the Project Well. Under Napa County's Water Availability Analysis, a Tier 2 well-interference analysis is required when a neighboring off-site well is located within 500 feet of the project well, irrespective of whether the project proposes no net increase in pumping. Residential wells on properties adjacent to ours have experienced periods when their production was insufficient to meet the owners' needs. Even limited additional drawdown by this Project Well could adversely impact the neighbors. The IS-MND's conclusion that Tier 2 is not required addresses only the "no net increase" screen and does not address the 500-foot proximity trigger. At a minimum, the County should confirm the distances between the wells shown in Figure 5 and the Project Well (WCR 2020-002111) and, if required, prepare a Tier 2 well-interference analysis. If the permit proceeds, a Well-Interference Monitoring & Response Plan should be imposed, including baseline measurements for participating domestic wells, ongoing monitoring/reporting, and enforceable drawdown-triggered curtailment/mitigation.

### **3) Agricultural Preserve Intent and Scale of Facility**

Napa's Agricultural Preserve policies are intended to preserve the County's agricultural heritage and keep agriculture the predominant land use, precluding uses incompatible with that purpose. Siting a 45,000-gallon/year production facility—with daily visitation up to 34 and events up to 125 guests—on a 10-acre parcel that contains only ~6 acres of vineyard means the majority of fruit must be trucked in, concentrating visitor-serving and processing activity next to long-standing

residences. While wineries are a permitted agricultural processing use, a facility of this scale and intensity on a small parcel, **positioned with minimum setbacks**, alongside a Significant Stream appears counter to the intent of preserving the area's agricultural character and rural quiet. At a minimum, if the County proceeds, it should do so only after full EIR review and with enforceable limits that truly protect the neighborhood and resource setting.

#### **4) Inadequate Mitigation**

Reliance on generic riparian fencing, monitoring, and average-based noise assumptions does not address (a) fish-specific protections, (b) foreseeable wastewater accidents, or (c) cumulative noise/traffic. CEQA §21002 requires adoption of all feasible mitigation; the measures proposed do not reduce impacts to less-than-significant levels.

#### **Request**

Because the record contains substantial evidence that biological resources, hydrology/water quality, groundwater, and cumulative traffic/noise impacts may be significant, the County must prepare a full Environmental Impact Report that evaluates and mitigates:

1. Neighborhood impacts (noise, traffic, lighting, privacy, and property value implications).
2. Biological resources, including Chinook salmon/anadromous fish in Dry Creek.
3. Hydrology/water quality, including accidental discharge risk to a Significant Stream.
4. Water availability/groundwater (no-net-increase baseline at ~9.33 AFY, offset reliability and monitoring, dry-year scenarios, and well interference).
5. Cumulative noise and traffic with the Oak Knoll Hotel (~0.57 miles away) and the adjacent Silenus / Ideology Cellars Winery, with special focus on harvest-season conditions.
6. Consistency with Agricultural Preserve intent and policies to preserve the County's agricultural heritage and rural character on small parcels adjacent to residences and a Significant Stream.

Approving this project on the current IS-MND would be inconsistent with CEQA and would undermine Napa County's Agricultural Preserve policies.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Robert Ringstad

/s/ Alicia Ringstad