

From: [MeetingClerk](#)
To: [Ringel, Matthew](#)
Subject: FW: Napa County Notice of Planning Commission Hearing & Intent to Adopt Mitigated Negative Declaration
Date: Thursday, November 20, 2025 8:16:59 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Please see email below.

Thank you,



A Tradition of Stewardship
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Napa County - Meeting Clerk - AR

Planning, Building, & Environmental Services
Napa County

Phone: 707-253-4417

Email: meetingclerk@countyofnapa.org

1195 Third Street, Suite 210

Napa, CA 94559

www.napacounty.gov

From: RICHARD W SVENDSEN <rsvendsen@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Thursday, November 20, 2025 8:13 AM
To: MeetingClerk <MeetingClerk@countyofnapa.org>
Subject: Re: Napa County Notice of Planning Commission Hearing & Intent to Adopt Mitigated Negative Declaration

[External Email - Use Caution]

Enough wineries!!

Sent from my iPhone

On Nov 20, 2025, at 8:04 AM, MeetingClerk
<MeetingClerk@countyofnapa.org> wrote:

ARROW AND BRANCH WINERY MAJOR MODIFICATION – P23-00057

<image002.png>

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1195 Third Street, Suite 210
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<P23-00057-MOD Arrow and Branch Major Modification Public Notice.pdf>

Bill and Dina Falk

1069 Darms Lane

Napa, CA 94558

November 17, 2025

Napa County Planning Commission
c/o Planning, Building & Environmental Services
1195 Third Street, Suite 210
Napa, CA 94559

**Re: Supplemental Comments on Arrow & Branch Winery Major Modification
Use Permit #P23-00057-MOD – Continued Hearing**

Dear Chairperson and Commissioners:

We respectfully submit this supplemental comment letter in advance of the continued hearing on the Arrow & Branch Winery Major Modification. We ask that this letter, along with all prior correspondence, be entered into the public record.

We are residents directly across Dry Creek from the Arrow & Branch facility. Ours is a quiet, low-density neighborhood defined by open space, wildlife, and the natural soundscape of the creek. The existing winery already pushes against the limits of compatibility with this environment; the proposed major modification would exceed those limits entirely. For the reasons detailed below, we urge the Commission **not to approve the project as currently proposed**.

Privacy & Visual Intrusion

Our backyard and pool area lie less than 100 feet from the existing structure. The proposed expansion extends the building further toward our property, increases sight lines into private residential areas, and intensifies the visitor presence near our home.

Key concerns:

- The modification requests **more than double** the current number of visits and entertainment activities.
- It seeks **expanded outdoor activity**, including amplified music, directly across from private residences.
- It proposes a ~ **35% increase in wine production**, which will intensify truck traffic, noise, industrial activity and further strain the water resources on a 10.09 acre parcel.

- Nighttime lighting already remains on through the night; the expansion would increase this light pollution.
 - We have documented **nighttime parties** and other activities inconsistent with the existing permit conditions.
 - Commercial vehicles continue to use the hammerhead as a staging and parking area, resulting in daily visual blight and headlights shining directly into our home.
 - The proposed landscaping plan does **not** provide meaningful privacy screening. Given our lower elevation, it would take **10–20 years** for olive trees to offer any substantive coverage.
 - The proposed **view deck and external metal staircase** exacerbate all visibility, noise, and privacy concerns. The applicant’s statement that “nobody will use the deck” is implausible; a deck with scenic views will inevitably attract visitor use. If the intent truly is to prevent use, then the structure should not exist at all.
-

Environmental Impacts on a Sensitive Riparian Corridor

The winery sits immediately adjacent to Dry Creek, a protected salmonid habitat and one of the county’s anchor reaches. Any expansion near such a corridor should be treated with the utmost caution.

Current issues:

- Water Audit California has identified multiple deficiencies in the hydrology and water-system analysis. We stand with this organization in their pursuit of doing what’s right – not just for the fish but for all those impacted by the winery’s abuse of the dwindling water resources.
- Construction and ongoing nighttime lighting appear to have displaced local wildlife, including owls that were once heard nightly.
- Lighting now emits across the creek and into neighboring bedrooms, disrupting human and wildlife behavior.
- Increased production, visitors, and impervious surfaces would compound runoff, noise, and habitat disturbance in an already fragile zone.

Rather than expanding, this area should be prioritized for **restoration**, not intensified development.

Process & Fairness Concerns

We are deeply troubled that critical parts of the review process have excluded—and in some cases ignored—important considerations related to the overall impact on neighbors living on the residential side of Dry Creek, as well as on the surrounding ecosystem.

- The process disregards the impact of the sheer size of the building and related structures. The current facility already affects neighborhood views, and the proposed additional square footage will exacerbate this problem. Has this topic even been discussed with staff?
- County staff did not visit our properties, meaning staff reports lack the perspective of those most impacted. The Commission and/or staff visited the winery but did not accept invitations to view conditions from our side of the creek.
- While the current planning process has evolved, the record must show—and those staff and commissioners not involved during the original construction must know—that there was a **blatant lack of solicitation of neighborhood comment** during the original approval process. Candidly, it sure felt like there was a lot of rubber-stamping and fast-tracking going on.

Many neighbors were not consulted—or even aware—when the original facility was approved years ago, only to discover a winery suddenly under construction.

This creates an unbalanced record that underestimates the severity of the impacts on nearby residents.

Economic Consequences for Surrounding Homes

Property values in our neighborhood are tied directly to:

- privacy
- viewsheds
- rural character
- noise levels
- environmental quality

Intensifying commercial operations so close to private residences and a protected creek will inevitably diminish these attributes. The cumulative effect of more visitors, more events, more lighting, more noise, and more industrial activity will degrade our neighborhood and undermine the long-term value of our homes.

Requested Actions

**** Please accept an open invitation to visit our property and get a direct feel for the existing and potential impact.****

In light of the serious, ongoing, and cumulative impacts, we respectfully request that the Commission:

- **Deny the project** as currently proposed;
- Cap visitation and events at **current approved levels**;
- Prohibit **all outdoor amplified sound**;
- Require a **comprehensive biological and hydrological assessment and feasibility study** reviewed by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Napa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District;
- Require a revised, credible **sound, lighting, screening, and operations plan** that protects neighboring residences and the riparian environment.
- Require a revised site plan that directs future construction of any kind, at any time, including parking facilities and roads, away from Dry Creek and surrounding neighbors.

Thank you for your time and for giving meaningful consideration to the residents who live with the daily consequences of these decisions.

Respectfully submitted,
Bill and Dina Falk
1069 Darms Lane
Napa, CA

[See Photos Below]

Photos Section:

The first section includes three images presented in sequence, which clearly illustrate the progressive impact to our view:

- (1) the original pre-construction view,
- (2) the current view as it exists today, and
- (3) a scaled rendering illustrating the visual impact of the proposed Major Modification.

The rendering is a best-effort approximation created for illustrative purposes. It removes the existing trees to provide proper visibility of the structure.

(4) Nighttime View







Recent Nighttime View from our pool area – Lights are on every Night, All Night



From: [MeetingClerk](#)
To: [Ringel, Matthew](#)
Subject: FW: Arrow and Branch Objection Letter
Date: Wednesday, November 26, 2025 11:39:19 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)



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From: Dina Falk <d3falk@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 26, 2025 9:34 AM
To: Richmond, Pete <pete.richmond@countyofnapa.org>
Cc: michale.parker@countyofnapa.org; MeetingClerk <MeetingClerk@countyofnapa.org>
Subject: Arrow and Branch Objection Letter

[External Email - Use Caution]

Dear Pete,

When construction at the Arrow & Branch winery finally slowed, we realized something unsettling — the nightly calls of our owl neighbors had disappeared. Our next-door neighbor now struggles to sleep because of the bright lights shining directly into her bedroom. One has to wonder: what right do we have to disrupt such a fragile ecosystem, and how did this winery receive approval to be built so close to Dry Creek — a critical environmental resource — without meaningful input from the people who live here?

I have submitted letters at every stage of this process: when the winery was first proposed, again in September, and now once more, hoping that this time our concerns will truly be heard. The construction phase was highly disruptive, but the larger issue is the lack of fairness, transparency, and balanced consideration for the surrounding community. It is quite clear that Arrow & Branch’s rights and desires have been honored every step of the way – they have gotten everything they wanted, but everyone else’s rights, particularly those having to do with quality of life – have been ignored.

At the September meeting, we listened as Donna, a representative for Arrow & Branch, make multiple statements that strained her credibility. Among them: that the noise we hear is “equivalent to a home refrigerator”; that wine tastings would occur indoors because it is “too windy” to taste wine outdoors; that Arrow & Branch is a “small family winery” and steward of

the land; and that there were “no fish in the creek,” despite Dry Creek being a known habitat for salmon and steelhead. We hope these statements were met with appropriate scrutiny.

While the Contursi family was initially open to some degree of communication, those efforts are now met with silence. To even consider approving this major modification would be unjust for numerous reasons:

1. **The proposed barrel room would be built even closer to the creek than the largest building currently stands.** This threatens the fragile ecosystem and eliminates any possibility of screening vegetation, further invading the privacy of neighbors
2. **The proposed landscaping plan is inadequate.** It would take 10–15 years for the olive trees to provide meaningful screening. Our properties sit significantly lower than the winery’s land, our view would be directly under these trees — offering no true privacy.
3. **The proposed view deck and metal staircase will greatly increase privacy and noise issues.** The sound of foot traffic on metal stairs will be unavoidable, and despite claims that visitors “won’t go up there,” common sense suggests otherwise. If it is not intended for use, why build it at all?
4. **Truck and vehicle activity continues to violate expectations.** For more than two years, trucks have used the hammerhead turnaround for parking and staging. Now, oversized black hired minibuses and SUVs drop guests there, with headlights shining directly into our home.
5. **There have been multiple events in violation of existing rules.** On November 8th, there was a loud party with bright lights, witnessed and endured by many neighbors. Arrow & Branch continues to disregard the rules already in place, making it unreasonable to consider granting *more* visitors, longer hours, additional events, or increased staffing. We should not be forced to endure or police this activity.
6. **Arrow & Branch hired its own noise consultant.** A truly fair process would require an independent evaluation from our side of the creek. We have recorded videos demonstrating that the noise impact is far greater than their report suggests.
7. **The Commission visited the winery but not the surrounding neighbors.** Despite invitations, no commissioners came to our side of the creek to understand the real impacts. We had no opportunity for input before construction began, and only three minutes to speak at the last meeting. This is not a balanced or equitable process.
8. **Exterior lights remain on all night and shine directly into our homes and natural habitat.** These lights are disruptive to residents and to wildlife. We request

that they be significantly dimmed and turned off by 10 p.m. each night.

9. **The proposed modification destroys our view corridor and quiet enjoyment of our homes.** Instead of looking out over vineyards and a rural landscape, we will be looking directly at structures, people, and activities that produce constant noise and disruption.
10. **Any allowed construction (though we hope none of it is approved) should be placed on the south side of the existing building,** where they would reduce — rather than increase — impacts on neighbors and Dry Creek.
11. **We support the California Water Audit** and its concerns regarding water use, creek proximity, and ecological impacts. This organization has undertaken enormous efforts to safeguard the Napa Valley water resource, advocating for a balanced use (not tilted to the wine industry as has been the tendency for decades), to the long-term benefit of all constituents, including threatened species in Dry Creek.

We remain firmly opposed to the additional construction being proposed. The facility is already enormous and operating at a scale inconsistent with the characterization of a “family winery.” As one committee member noted, “We have never had a situation like this where a winery has been built so close to an important creek and next to a neighborhood.”

Approving this modification would set a troubling precedent for future wineries and for the long-term character of Napa Valley.

I respectfully ask that you reject this major modification.

Sincerely,

Dina J. Falk

From: [MeetingClerk](#)
To: [Ringel, Matthew](#)
Subject: FW: Arrow and Branch Objection Letter
Date: Wednesday, November 26, 2025 11:39:34 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)



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From: Dina Falk <d3falk@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 26, 2025 9:41 AM
To: Brooks, Walter <walter.brooks@countyofnapa.org>
Cc: Parker, Michael <Michael.Parker@countyofnapa.org>; MeetingClerk <MeetingClerk@countyofnapa.org>
Subject: Arrow and Branch Objection Letter

[External Email - Use Caution]

Dear Mr. Brooks,

When construction at the Arrow & Branch winery finally slowed, we realized something unsettling — the nightly calls of our owl neighbors had disappeared. Our next-door neighbor now struggles to sleep because of the bright lights shining directly into her bedroom. One has to wonder: what right do we have to disrupt such a fragile ecosystem, and how did this winery receive approval to be built so close to Dry Creek — a critical environmental resource — without meaningful input from the people who live here?

I have submitted letters at every stage of this process: when the winery was first proposed, again in September, and now once more, hoping that this time our concerns will truly be heard. The construction phase was highly disruptive, but the larger issue is the lack of fairness, transparency, and balanced consideration for the surrounding community. It is quite clear that Arrow & Branch’s rights and desires have been honored every step of the way – they have gotten everything they wanted, but everyone else’s rights, particularly those having to do with quality of life – have been ignored.

At the September meeting, we listened as Donna, a representative for Arrow & Branch, make multiple statements that strained her credibility. Among them: that the noise we hear is “equivalent to a home refrigerator”; that wine tastings would occur indoors because it is “too

windy” to taste wine outdoors; that Arrow & Branch is a “small family winery” and steward of the land; and that there were “no fish in the creek,” despite Dry Creek being a known habitat for salmon and steelhead. We hope these statements were met with appropriate scrutiny.

While the Contursi family was initially open to some degree of communication, those efforts are now met with silence. To even consider approving this major modification would be unjust for numerous reasons:

1. **The proposed barrel room would be built even closer to the creek than the largest building currently stands.** This threatens the fragile ecosystem and eliminates any possibility of screening vegetation, further invading the privacy of neighbors
2. **The proposed landscaping plan is inadequate.** It would take 10–15 years for the olive trees to provide meaningful screening. Our properties sit significantly lower than the winery’s land, our view would be directly under these trees — offering no true privacy.
3. **The proposed view deck and metal staircase will greatly increase privacy and noise issues.** The sound of foot traffic on metal stairs will be unavoidable, and despite claims that visitors “won’t go up there,” common sense suggests otherwise. If it is not intended for use, why build it at all?
4. **Truck and vehicle activity continues to violate expectations.** For more than two years, trucks have used the hammerhead turnaround for parking and staging. Now, oversized black hired minibuses and SUVs drop guests there, with headlights shining directly into our home.
5. **There have been multiple events in violation of existing rules.** On November 8th, there was a loud party with bright lights, witnessed and endured by many neighbors. Arrow & Branch continues to disregard the rules already in place, making it unreasonable to consider granting *more* visitors, longer hours, additional events, or increased staffing. We should not be forced to endure or police this activity.
6. **Arrow & Branch hired its own noise consultant.** A truly fair process would require an independent evaluation from our side of the creek. We have recorded videos demonstrating that the noise impact is far greater than their report suggests.
7. **The Commission visited the winery but not the surrounding neighbors.** Despite invitations, no commissioners came to our side of the creek to understand the real impacts. We had no opportunity for input before construction began, and only three minutes to speak at the last meeting. This is not a balanced or equitable process.
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We remain firmly opposed to the additional construction being proposed. The facility is already enormous and operating at a scale inconsistent with the characterization of a “family winery.” As one committee member noted, “We have never had a situation like this where a winery has been built so close to an important creek and next to a neighborhood.”

Approving this modification would set a troubling precedent for future wineries and for the long-term character of Napa Valley.

I respectfully ask that you reject this major modification.

Sincerely,

Dina J. Falk

From: [MeetingClerk](#)
To: [Ringel, Matthew](#)
Subject: FW: Arrow and Branch Objection Letter
Date: Wednesday, November 26, 2025 11:39:42 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)



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From: Dina Falk <d3falk@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 26, 2025 9:45 AM
To: Williams, Molly <molly.williams@countyofnapa.org>
Cc: Parker, Michael <Michael.Parker@countyofnapa.org>; MeetingClerk <MeetingClerk@countyofnapa.org>
Subject: Arrow and Branch Objection Letter

[External Email - Use Caution]

Dear Ms. Williams,

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Sincerely,

Dina J. Falk

From: [MeetingClerk](#)
To: [Ringel, Matthew](#)
Subject: FW: Arrow and Branch Objection Letter
Date: Wednesday, November 26, 2025 11:39:27 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)



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From: Dina Falk <d3falk@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 26, 2025 9:38 AM
To: Brunzell, Kara <kara.brunzell@countyofnapa.org>
Cc: Parker, Michael <Michael.Parker@countyofnapa.org>; MeetingClerk <MeetingClerk@countyofnapa.org>
Subject: Arrow and Branch Objection Letter

[External Email - Use Caution]

Dear Ms. Brunzell,

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I respectfully ask that you reject this major modification.

Sincerely,

Dina J. Falk

From: [MeetingClerk](#)
To: [Ringel, Matthew](#)
Subject: FW: Arrow and Branch Objection Letter
Date: Wednesday, November 26, 2025 11:39:09 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)



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From: Dina Falk <d3falk@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 26, 2025 9:33 AM
To: Dameron, Megan <megan.dameron@countyofnapa.org>
Cc: Parker, Michael <Michael.Parker@countyofnapa.org>; MeetingClerk <MeetingClerk@countyofnapa.org>
Subject: Arrow and Branch Objection Letter

[External Email - Use Caution]

Dear Ms. Dameron,

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At the September meeting, we listened as Donna, a representative for Arrow & Branch, make multiple statements that strained her credibility. Among them: that the noise we hear is “equivalent to a home refrigerator”; that wine tastings would occur indoors because it is “too

windy” to taste wine outdoors; that Arrow & Branch is a “small family winery” and steward of the land; and that there were “no fish in the creek,” despite Dry Creek being a known habitat for salmon and steelhead. We hope these statements were met with appropriate scrutiny.

While the Contursi family was initially open to some degree of communication, those efforts are now met with silence. To even consider approving this major modification would be unjust for numerous reasons:

1. **The proposed barrel room would be built even closer to the creek than the largest building currently stands.** This threatens the fragile ecosystem and eliminates any possibility of screening vegetation, further invading the privacy of neighbors
2. **The proposed landscaping plan is inadequate.** It would take 10–15 years for the olive trees to provide meaningful screening. Our properties sit significantly lower than the winery’s land, our view would be directly under these trees — offering no true privacy.
3. **The proposed view deck and metal staircase will greatly increase privacy and noise issues.** The sound of foot traffic on metal stairs will be unavoidable, and despite claims that visitors “won’t go up there,” common sense suggests otherwise. If it is not intended for use, why build it at all?
4. **Truck and vehicle activity continues to violate expectations.** For more than two years, trucks have used the hammerhead turnaround for parking and staging. Now, oversized black hired minibuses and SUVs drop guests there, with headlights shining directly into our home.
5. **There have been multiple events in violation of existing rules.** On November 8th, there was a loud party with bright lights, witnessed and endured by many neighbors. Arrow & Branch continues to disregard the rules already in place, making it unreasonable to consider granting *more* visitors, longer hours, additional events, or increased staffing. We should not be forced to endure or police this activity.
6. **Arrow & Branch hired its own noise consultant.** A truly fair process would require an independent evaluation from our side of the creek. We have recorded videos demonstrating that the noise impact is far greater than their report suggests.
7. **The Commission visited the winery but not the surrounding neighbors.** Despite invitations, no commissioners came to our side of the creek to understand the real impacts. We had no opportunity for input before construction began, and only three minutes to speak at the last meeting. This is not a balanced or equitable process.
8. **Exterior lights remain on all night and shine directly into our homes and**

natural habitat. These lights are disruptive to residents and to wildlife. We request that they be significantly dimmed and turned off by 10 p.m. each night.

9. **The proposed modification destroys our view corridor and quiet enjoyment of our homes.** Instead of looking out over vineyards and a rural landscape, we will be looking directly at structures, people, and activities that produce constant noise and disruption.
10. **Any allowed construction (though we hope none of it is approved) should be placed on the south side of the existing building,** where they would reduce — rather than increase — impacts on neighbors and Dry Creek.
11. **We support the California Water Audit** and its concerns regarding water use, creek proximity, and ecological impacts. This organization has undertaken enormous efforts to safeguard the Napa Valley water resource, advocating for a balanced use (not tilted to the wine industry as has been the tendency for decades), to the long-term benefit of all constituents, including threatened species in Dry Creek.

We remain firmly opposed to the additional construction being proposed. The facility is already enormous and operating at a scale inconsistent with the characterization of a “family winery.” As one committee member noted, “We have never had a situation like this where a winery has been built so close to an important creek and next to a neighborhood.”

Approving this modification would set a troubling precedent for future wineries and for the long-term character of Napa Valley.

I respectfully ask that you reject this major modification.

Sincerely,

Dina J. Falk

From: [MeetingClerk](#)
To: [Ringel, Matthew](#)
Subject: FW: Arrow and Branch Objection Letter
Date: Wednesday, November 26, 2025 11:39:48 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)



A Tradition of Stewardship
A Commitment to Service

Napa County - Meeting Clerk - AR

Planning, Building, & Environmental Services
Napa County

Phone: 707-253-4417

Email: meetingclerk@countyofnapa.org

1195 Third Street, Suite 210

Napa, CA 94559

www.napacounty.gov

From: Dina Falk <d3falk@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 26, 2025 9:52 AM
To: Ringel, Matthew <matthew.ringel@countyofnapa.org>
Cc: MeetingClerk <MeetingClerk@countyofnapa.org>
Subject: Arrow and Branch Objection Letter

[External Email - Use Caution]

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Sincerely,

Dina J. Falk

From: [Charles Welton Rotz](#)
To: [Dameron, Megan](#); [Richmond, Pete](#); [Brunzell, Kara](#); [Brooks, Walter](#); [Williams, Molly](#); [Ringel, Matthew](#)
Subject: "Public Comment – Item 7A, Arrow & Branch Winery Major Modification (P23-00057-MOD)"
Date: Sunday, November 30, 2025 12:50:31 PM

[External Email - Use Caution]

Dear Commissioners

We purchased our property at 1077 Darms Land in 2003. It was to be our forever home. The location within agricultural zoned area appealed to us. We joined the agriculture community by raising 100 Myer lemon trees. Our lemon orchard is registered with the USDA, the NASS, and the California Fruit Acreage survey.

Lemon trees require water. We have a relatively shallow well near the banks of Dry Creek. Occasionally, when the surrounding vineyards are heavily irrigated, our well runs dry. We have a 5000 gallon storage tank and sometimes have had to buy water delivered by truck. We practice water conservation in our home. We have tried to tie into the county water system, but are just beyond the service limits for water supply. We also drilled a second, deeper well site, but did not find water. So we are dependent on well water, as is everyone else west on Darms Lane.

Dry Creek has a limited gravel bed below the surface. Our well draws water from this gravel. Just after the first rains this Fall, salmon were seen swimming up stream to spawn. This is a vital part of Agricultural Zoned land.

If Arrow & Branch Winery completes their proposed project, it will require massive amounts of water. Their request for additional water usage, based on documented previous usage, is inaccurate.

The size of their proposed wine processing facilities, plus a large entertainment center, is a huge, industrial processing plant which will run 24/7, with all its machines, trucks, and noise during harvest. This is not only for processing their own grapes, but will involve trucking in grapes from even outside Napa County. This is not Agricultural Usage.

If this project is built, I will not have enough water to maintain the Myer lemon trees. This will be a loss for Napa county agricultural land.

If Arrow & Branch wants to commercially process wine, it is essential for them to locate in the industrial zoned area of Napa.

Thanks,
Welton Rotz