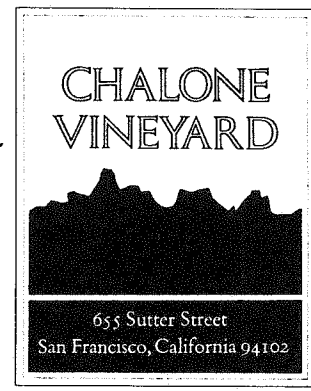


*3/26/79
Petitions*



March 26, 1979

Director
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms
Department of the Treasury
Washington, D.C. 20226

Attention: R:R

Re: Petition for Establishment of
Viticultural Area -- "The Pinnacles"

Dear Sir:

Pursuant to the provisions of 27 CFR §§4.25a(e)(2) (as promulgated by T.D. ATF-53, September 22, 1978) and 71.41(c), the undersigned, Chalone Vineyard (BW CA-4512), an interested party, herewith petitions for the establishment of a "viticultural area" covering the discrete geographical area in which Chalone is located, and more particularly described in the following paragraphs. It is proposed that this viticultural area should bear the name "The Pinnacles."

1. Evidence that the name of the area is known.

The area sought to be designated is (as set forth more fully in the next paragraph) an area immediately adjoining the Pinnacles National Monument, located in unincorporated Monterey County, California. The Pinnacles was initially established as a Forest Reserve by Proclamation of President Theodore Roosevelt on July 18, 1906; by subsequent Proclamation (No. 796) of January 16, 1908, it was proclaimed a National Monument. The boundaries of the Monument have been successively enlarged by Proclamation No. 1660, of May 7, 1923; No. 1704, of July 2, 1924; No. 1948, of April 13, 1931; No. 2050, of July 11, 1933; and No. 2528, of December 5, 1941. A further enlargement of the Monument has recently been approved in accordance with a master plan completed in August 1975, by which an additional one and one-half sections would be joined (the East Half of Section 32, T. 16 S., R. 7 E.; the East Half of Section 4, T. 17 S., R. 7 E.; and the West Half of Section 5, T. 17 S., R. 7 E.).

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The name "The Pinnacles" is known nationally as well as locally, by reason of the Monument. It is also commonly used to designate the area immediately adjacent to the Monument itself (i.e., the area herein sought to be designated). Chalone itself has used the name "The Pinnacles" on its wine labels, to describe the winery's location, since at least as far back as the 1960 vintage. Submitted herewith as exhibits to this application are (1) a half-bottle (full) of Chalone's 1960 Chenin Blanc, bearing the front and back labels then in use, and (2) the 1977 Chenin Blanc front label plus back label currently in use. (Because it is now something of a collector's item, in due course the company would appreciate return of the 1960 bottle.)

2. Boundaries.

The proposed viticultural area, "The Pinnacles," consists of a geological bench of rolling land in the Gabilan (or Gavilan) Range, adjoining the Pinnacles National Monument. The area has a mean elevation above sea level of approximately 1650 feet (500 meters), and drains into Bryant Canyon, Stonewall Canyon, and Shirttail Gulch. Its boundaries, drawn to the nearest section or half-section line (see area outlined in blue on the enclosed maps), are: To the south and west, the points at which the land drops off sharply to the Salinas Valley; to the north, the ridge effectively dividing Monterey and San Benito Counties, and the Gloria Valley on the other side; and, to the east, the boundaries of the National Monument itself.

The area proposed, a total of nine Sections, includes all of the land which has historically been farmed on the bench, as well as essentially all reasonably capable of being farmed. An inspection of the largest-scale (7.5-minute) map reveals that there are no other arable benches or areas of any significant extent, bordering on the Pinnacles National Monument. Nor are there any even in the closeby vicinity at a comparable elevation, with the exception of the Gloria Valley in San Benito County, whose soil and topography are completely different from those of the area here sought to be designated, and which drains in the opposite direction (i.e., to the north and east, into San Benito County) from ours (south- and westerly, into the

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Salinas Valley). (To the best of our knowledge, wine grapes have never been grown commercially in the Gloria Valley. If at some further point they should be, a new and distinct viticultural area could properly be established.)

It should be noted that the Paul Masson winery has since some time in the mid-1960's been using the name "Pinnacles" as a designation for its vineyard and winery located on the Salinas Valley floor, adjacent to the city of Soledad (mean elevation about 300 feet, or, 100 meters, above sea level); and has also from time to time in the past used the name on some bottles of wine which presumably originated from the vineyard so designated. As can easily be seen from examination of the U.S.G.S. maps submitted herewith, however, and as additionally described below, the geographical features of the Salinas Valley floor bear no resemblance whatsoever to those of the Range in which the Pinnacles National Monument and our proposed viticultural area are located. In terms of proximity, the Paul Masson vineyard (outlined in green on the enclosed maps) is distant from the Monument some twelve miles by road (State Highway 146) and a good five miles as the crow flies. The difference in elevation is about 1500 feet (450 meters).

While we would have no particular objection to Paul Masson's continued use of the name "Pinnacles" for its vineyard, if that could be done consistent with this application and the Bureau's regulations, it should be clear from location as well as geographical features (discussed below) that that vineyard does not belong in the viticultural area sought to be designated, and has inferior claim to use of the "Pinnacles" name as a separate viticultural area. (To the extent relevant, it may also be noted that it has an inferior historical claim, as well, its first commercial usage commencing at least several years subsequent to Chalone's.)

3. Geographical features.

It is in its geographical features -- climate, soil, elevation and physical characteristics -- and their marked influence on the quality and distinctiveness of the

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grapes (and wine) thus produced, that the uniqueness of the proposed viticultural area, from the surrounding area and Monterey County generally, is perhaps most strongly evidenced.

The lands encompassed within the 5760-acre area at issue are rolling hills with thin, sparse topsoil. It is a low rainfall area. The native vegetation is chaparral with scattered oaks and Digger pines. As can be seen from the Geological Map of Monterey County, submitted herewith, the geology of the proposed area (outlined in blue) consists of Miocene volcanic and Mesozoic granite rocks, heavy in limestone deposits, together with the soils derived from these three types of mineral formation. (The area also includes a small patch of fan deposit at the head of Stonewall Canyon.) The volcanic rocks produce a reddish soil, the granitic rocks a sandy, decomposed-granite (D.G.) soil, and the limestone deposits appear as whitish outcroppings throughout the area. There is a deposit of calcite (the rhomboid crystalline form of limestone (CaCO₃)) located in one portion of the area (the North half of the West half of the East half of Section 8, T. 17 S., R. 7 E).

The elevation of the proposed area ranges from approximately 1400 feet (425 meters) to 2000 feet (600 meters), with a mean elevation of approximately 1650 feet (500 meters). It is thus set off from the Salinas Valley, to which the topography drops off abruptly, to the south and west, by between some 1100 and 1700 feet of elevation. The other boundaries of the proposed area are equally pronounced: The lands to the immediate east, though similar in mineral deposits, are encompassed in the Pinnacles National Monument (and hence are, all else aside, unavailable for private agriculture). The northern boundary consists of a ridge demarking the watershed divide between Monterey and San Benito Counties; the Gloria Valley beyond is (as shown on the geological map) entirely alluvial, and thus distinctly different in soil type and topography. The Salinas Valley floor (on which the Paul Masson vineyard which has been using the name "Pinnacles" is located) is also completely different geologically from the proposed viticultural area (and the Pinnacles National Monument itself), consisting as it does of alluvium and river terrace rocks (shown on the geological map as yellow areas designated "Qt" and "Qal").

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The difference in elevation between the Salinas Valley and the proposed viticultural area produces dramatic differences in climatic conditions, as well. Using the standards established by the University of California at Davis, the Salinas Valley falls into climatic Region I, while the proposed viticultural area is clearly Region II. The predominant feature of the Valley weather is the cooling wind which blows in from the ocean (Monterey Bay) practically every day of the year. In summer, the temperature is nearly always at least ten degrees cooler in the Valley than at the Pinnacles. During the night, the cool air which has been drawn into the Valley from the ocean forms a thick layer of fog reaching to an elevation of about 1000 feet (300 meters), by cooling the warm air above. Thus on most mornings there is fog in the Salinas Valley which usually burns off between 10:00 a.m. and noon, at which point the wind comes up again and the cycle is repeated. The proposed "Pinnacles" viticultural area, in contradistinction, does not experience this weather pattern at all. The morning fog in the Salinas Valley appears from the Pinnacles area like the surface of a broad, white lake. Only very occasionally do a few wisps of fog reach up to the benchlands, and the cool afternoon winds which blow almost incessantly in the Valley hardly ever rise above 1000 feet elevation.

4. Specific Boundaries.

The proposed viticultural area, "The Pinnacles," has been outlined in blue on the various maps submitted concurrently with this application, and consists of the following sections of the Mount Diablo Meridian:

<u>Township</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>Section</u>	<u>Portion of Section</u>
16 South	7 East	31	East 1/2
16 South	7 East	32	West 1/2
17 South	6 East	1	all
17 South	7 East	5	West 1/2
17 South	7 East	6	all
17 South	7 East	7	all
17 South	7 East	8	all
17 South	7 East	9	all
17 South	7 East	16	all
17 South	7 East	17	all
17 South	7 East	18	East 1/2

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The total acreage embraced within the area is thus nine full sections, or, 5760 acres.

The boundaries herein proposed include essentially all of the reasonably farmable land, and all of the land which has historically been farmed, on the bench drained by the Bryant and Stonewall Canyons and Shirttail Gulch. The section and half-section lines set forth above, describing the proposed area, do not in fact quite precisely coincide with the geographical boundaries of these three drainage areas; however, it is our belief that all land suitable for grape-growing on this bench has been included within the described perimeters. As a consequence, use of the township, range, and section designations seems the simplest and most certain means of delimiting the area to be designated.

5. Maps.

The following maps, with the proposed viticultural area and other significant features appropriately marked, are submitted with this application:

a. Four U.S.G.S. 7.5-minute series topographic (joined together): "Soledad," "North Chalone Peak," "Mt. Johnson," and "Bickmore Canyon" Quadrangles.

b. Four U.S.G.S. 15-minutes series topographic (joined together): "Soledad," "Greenfield," "Gonzales," and "San Benito" Quadrangles. (The 15-minute series "Soledad" map is out of print, and may only be obtained in photocopy from U.S.G.S. historical files.)

c. State of California Department of Conservation Geologic Map of Monterey County, scale 1:250,000 (County Report 5, Plate 1).

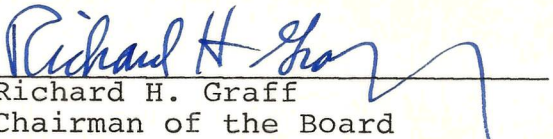
Accordingly, it is requested that the Bureau institute the necessary proceedings to have the area des-

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cribed herein formally designated as a "viticultural area"
within the meaning of 27 CFR §4.25a(e)(2), bearing the name
"The Pinnacles."

Respectfully submitted,

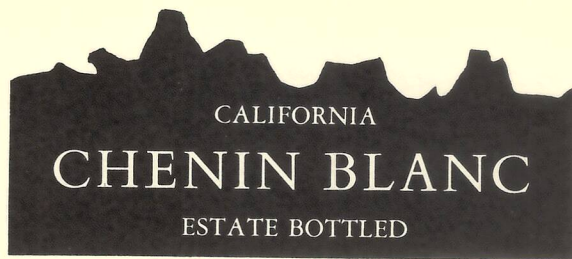
GAVILAN VINEYARDS, INC.,
d.b.a.
CHALONE VINEYARD

By 
Richard H. Graff
Chairman of the Board

RHG:caj
Enclosures

1977

CHALONE VINEYARD



CALIFORNIA

CHENIN BLANC

ESTATE BOTTLED

This vintage produced 5,200 bottles,
of which this is No. **5158**

A table wine, grown and bottled by
Chalone Vineyard. The Pinnacles, Soledad,
Monterey County, California.

THIS WINE comes from a very small vineyard on the Chalone Bench of the Gavilan Mountains at about 2,000 feet elevation, near the Pinnacles National Monument. The vineyard produces only varietal table wines and, occasionally, in favorable years, California champagne, from four premium varieties of grapes. All are Estate Bottled, a description controlled by law requiring that all grapes be grown by the winery, and that the wine be made and bottled on the premises. But the most special thing about this isolated, difficult-to-get-to vineyard is its soil. Discovered many years ago by a Frenchman in search of land comparable to that of France, this vineyard grows on the same type of sparse, reddish soil underlain by limestone as produces the great French Burgundies along the Côte d'Or. The production is quite small, for to date each acre of soil will yield only two barrels of 300 bottles each of wine. Thus each bottle is filled with the essence of the soil—the French “goût de terroir”—which gives the wine a fullness of bouquet and flavor unique to this vineyard. The wines are made after the classical French methods, in French Oak barrels, with nothing added or taken away artificially.

