

*Jack W. Florence, Sr. - Chairman  
Rockpile Appellation Committee*

14000 Rockpile Road  
Geyserville, CA 95441  
Phone:(707) 433-6844  
Fax: (707) 431-9102  
E-Mail: charisv@att.net

May 25, 2000

Ms. Nancy Sutton  
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms  
221 Main Street - 11th Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94105

Dear Ms. Sutton:

Pursuant to Treasury Decision A.T.F.-60 (44FR56692) the undersigned petition you to establish "*Rockpile*" described herein, as an American Viticultural Area.

### **I History**

The area delineated in this petition contains three well established entities long known by the name *Rockpile*. *Rockpile* was the name given to an obviously rocky peak situated about fifteen miles from the Sonoma County Coast and just a few miles south of Mendocino County. Historian Cathy Park described the formation of La Roca Monte Rancho in 1911 and the subsequent development of the name *Rockpile*, as follows:

In 1911 Cap Ornbaum convinced a group of wealthy friends to join him in forming a land investment partnership. Their first purchase was the Bee Springs Ranch on the Northwest slope of *Rockpile* Peak. He then engaged in tough negotiations to purchase the bordering *Rockpile* Ranch which included all of *Rockpile* Peak. About that time one of Ornbaum's partners came up with the name "La Roca Monte Rancho" for the partnership. Their expertise in accumulating land was far greater than their expertise in the Spanish language and the land holdings grew over time eventually extending from *Rockpile* Peak to the Bishop homestead for a total of about 21,000 acres. The property was soon referred to simply as Rockpile Ranch. Ornbaum and his family ran sheep on the

property and entertained many guests from San Francisco in the hunting lodge they developed on the property. To manage the vast area, they divided the ranch into three sections each with a resident ranch manager. The sections were referred to as *Rockpile* 1,2, and 3. The old Bishop Ranch was *Rockpile* 3, and that was the main headquarters. During the depression much of the property was sold, but 18,000 acres of the *Rockpile* Ranch were kept intact and stayed in the Ornbaun family. By the late 1930's it was one of the largest sheep ranches in Northern California and folks from Cloverdale to Healdsburg began referring to the general region as "*Rockpile*". By then the road winding up the mountains and along the ridge to the main headquarters of *Rockpile* Ranch, had become *Rockpile* Road reflecting the adoption of the name for the high country. It should be noted that *Rockpile* Ranch is identified by that name on the USGS Map entitled Big Foot Mountain - 1991.

Tennessee Bishop's road opened up the high country to homesteaders, and Cap Ornbaun's well known sheep ranch played a part in the growth of the county's agricultural economy. The name "*Rockpile*" for a particularly beautiful region of high country is part of their legacy. Nearly 150 years later, the name *Rockpile* continues to evoke nostalgia for a time when the independent spirit of strong willed folks had free rein. With creation of Lake Sonoma by the U.S. Corps of Engineers, *Rockpile* Road was paved and brought to Sonoma County standards.

An early reference to the recognition of the name *Rockpile*, dated 28 October 1882 is attached as Reference A.

## **II General Description**

The area for which approval as *Rockpile* is requested is an irregular parcel of land that roughly simulates a rectangle, running from east to west. The eastern portion starts at the western edge of the Lake Sonoma Recreational Area (owned by the USA and operated by the Corp of Engineers) and runs in a generally west-

northwesterly direction. See USGS Maps attached in Reference B. The western end of the subject area encompasses *Rockpile Peak* and *Rockpile Ranch No. 3*. Wine grapes are currently being grown at each end of the subject area. The entire area is enclosed within 800 foot elevation contours with U.S. survey lines connecting regions of higher elevation. (See U.S.G.S. maps attached.)

### **III Horticultural Environment**

#### **A. Climate**

The climate of *Rockpile* is unique and distinct from that of the rest of northwestern Sonoma County. During springtime, from March into June, daytime temperatures at *Rockpile* run five to ten degrees cooler than Healdsburg. This is mostly due to the elevation of *Rockpile*. In the absence of an inversion layer, the temperature decreases about six degrees Fahrenheit for each 1000 feet in elevation. Further adding to the cooling effect is the exposure to the cool prevailing northwesterly breezes in the springtime, from which the neighboring valley floors are more protected. The viticultural effect of this cooler climate is a delay in bud break, and slower growth, resulting in delayed bloom and fruit set.

This temperature anomaly reverses over the summer, with *Rockpile* becoming slightly warmer than area valleys, up to five degrees on some days. This is due to the effect of the summer marine inversion, and associated fog. As the fog is generally advected from the south, *Rockpile* being further north receives less fog, and clears earlier, resulting in more sunshine and warmer temperatures. On days when the marine inversion is shallower than 1000 feet, *Rockpile* will actually be above the fog.

With lengthening nights in the fall, nocturnal inversions become more common, and night time temperatures can be considerably warmer than in surrounding areas. The marine inversion becomes shallower resulting in more occurrences when lower elevations are submerged in fog, while *Rockpile* is above the fog. Hence the crucial grape ripening period of September and early October is

slightly warmer, and much drier in the *Rockpile area*.

## **B. Soils**

The soils of *Rockpile* generally consist of topsoil reaching a depth of twelve to twenty-four inches in viticulturally favored areas. The topsoil is generally loam to clay loam, and red to brown in color. Areas of small rock and gravel mixed in the topsoil have been found, as have areas with outcroppings of larger rock, chert. On the north facing slope, the topsoil tends to be deeper, more loamy in texture, and of higher organic matter. The south facing slope tends to have a shallower topsoil, with more clay and rock. The topsoil is acid to very acid with pH's of 4.9 to 6.5 having been observed. The subsoil is more clayey in texture; however areas of weathered shale and sandstone, in addition to the topography contribute to a well drained condition. The soils differ from neighboring valley viticultural areas due to the relative absence of silt and sand, higher oxidized iron properties (red color), and clay subsoil.

## **C. Elevation**

A principal feature of *Rockpile* is its elevation. The boundary over the east and north side of the subject area is delineated by the 800 foot elevation contour on four U.S. Geological Survey maps. The west and south boundaries follow section lines which average close to 1800 ft in elevation. Currently vineyards are established from elevations of 800 feet to over 1800 feet, with approximately 95% of the area above 1000 feet.

Evidence as to the unique viticultural nature of the subject area can be found in the decision of Rosenblum Cellars to produce for the last two years a Zinfandel bearing the vineyard designated label *Rockpile Road Vineyard*. The grapes are 100% sourced from the proposed *Rockpile* AVA. Similar vinification plans are anticipated at J. Fritz Winery for other grape varieties grown in the subject area.

#### **IV Specific Boundaries**

Start at the cattle crossing on *Rockpile Road* twenty one hundred feet west of the entrance to Liberty Glen Campground. The cattle crossing lies on the north-south line bisecting Section 15, T10N R11W. Proceed easterly along *Rockpile Road* a distance of 2800 feet, to the eastern edge Section 15, T10N R11W, thence due north along the east boundary of said section to the intersection of the 800 (eight hundred) foot elevation contour line, thence in a northwest direction along this contour line to the point where the 800 foot elevation contour line intersects the west boundary of Section 20 T11N R12W thence south along this line to the intersection with the southern boundary of Section 32, T11N R12W thence east along this line to intersection of the west boundary of Section 1 T10N R 12W thence south along said west border to the intersection with the north boundary of Section 12 T10N R 12W thence east along the northern border of Section 12 to the intersection with the western border of Section 8 T10N R11W, then south along said line to the intersection of the north boundary Section 17T 10N R11W, thence east along said line 9250 feet thence south 2860 feet thence east 1320 feet to the western border of Section 15 T10N R11W thence south along said line a distance of 500 feet thence east 1000 feet thence north 500 feet thence east 1375 feet thence north to point of the beginning.

#### **V Maps**

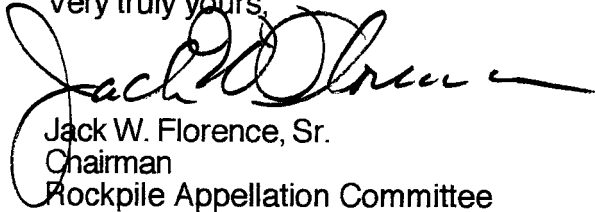
Enclosed as Reference B are four U.S.G.S. maps depicting the area proposed for this appellation. The maps are entitled:

Warm Springs Dam	1978
Cloverdale	1960
Tombs Creek	1978
Big Foot Mountain	1991

*Rockpile*, by virtue of its unique history, geography, climate and soils, is a distinct and unique viticultural area and is so recognized by viticulturists and enologists in the area. We the undersigned respectfully request your affirmative consideration of this petition. If you have any questions concerning this petition, please contact me.

We thank you in advance for your prompt consideration of this petition.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jack W. Florence, Sr.", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jack W. Florence, Sr.  
Chairman  
Rockpile Appellation Committee

cc: Jack Florence, Jr.  
Tom Mauritson  
Rod & Cathy Park

# REFERENCE A ma D emoc

THE WORLD IS GOVERNED TOO MUCH."

COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, OCTOBER 28, 1882.

### Condoling.

Some time ago that Ex-Gov-  
E. S. Pitt, the "bridge  
through the interior on  
burn and repair Republi-  
they announced that they  
one night, a few of the  
tried to smile, but the  
it heaped up over them,  
in this clad archon on a  
Republican friends had  
in the Sacramento Bee  
both of which papers  
ed are now appealing to  
the Senate," for they  
band too expensive and  
out music and torches  
colorably well filled, the  
cient scene of joyless  
scholy, and the faces of  
ats were so big in their  
that they looked like a  
a chairman called the  
might have been spared  
y too dead to kick, and  
manipulator Ex-Gov-  
rner is not as hand-  
good old bridge burn-  
ing measure around the  
owy figure is no more.  
know of a number of  
shore to go through  
ould have added, "that  
his." He thought the  
parties would oppose  
o long as votes will  
en told a long story  
going into a Rip Van  
ears ago and just now  
to charge of the Gov-  
to the effect that he  
aching supremacy of  
e charged upon dis-  
Republicans the res-  
such terrible results.  
highest ambition was  
blicans' cast off gov-  
rnick the DEMOCRAT  
he Railroad Union,  
Republican organs,  
this year the  
this year the  
the cast-off anti-  
democracy, and with  
Estee's head stick-

### TENNESSEE BISHOP.

The Healdsburg Enterprise, a few weeks ago, contained a biographical sketch of Tennessee Bishop, the Democratic nominee for Sheriff, from which we derive the following interesting particulars: The father of Mr. Bishop came to this country from Ireland at the age of twenty-five, and early settled in Carter county, Tennessee, where he married Miss Margaret Car-riger. The fruit of this union was thir-teen children, of whom Tennessee was the second, his birthday being June 12, 1830. When he attained his majority he removed to Iowa, and subsequently to Jackson county, Missouri, where he resided until the Spring of 1852, when he came to Cali-fornia. He first settled in Placer county, and engaged in mining. Subsequently he went to Sacramento, arriving there just after the great fire of 1855, and was also there during the flood of 1852-3. In February, 1853, he came to the town of Sonoma, in this county, and worked at his trade as a carpenter. That Fall, he went to Tuolumne county, and engaged in min-ing until the next Spring, when he re-sumed work at his trade. In 1854 he was appointed Deputy Sheriff of Mendocino, and commissioned to take charge of the Big River Sawmills under attachment. In the Spring of 1855 he again returned to Sonoma, and was married, May 3, 1855, to Miss Eliza Smith. During that year, Mr. Bishop bought a farm, and having raised two crops on it, sold the place in 1857, and settled in Petaluma. In May, 1858, he left Petaluma, and, going into the moun-tains in the northern part of Sonoma, lo-cated what is known as "Rock Pile Ranch." He remained there for seven years, engaged in cattle-raising, and then sold his ranch and bought a farm at the head of Dry Creek Valley. In 1865 he

### THE FOGHORN CAMPAIGN.

The noise of Estee is heard in the land. It is the favorite vocal disturbance of the Republican party of the great moral ideas and anti-monopoly principles—in a horn, and a foghorn at that. The Chronicle grinds out taking tunes, and Estee's fog-horn dismally disturbs the State. And with these two queer missionaries of op-position to corporations (in a horn) tramp the following distinguished anti-monopo-lists, gibbering at the people:

- Fur Seal Miller,
- Tugboat Perkins,
- Star Route Page,
- Railroad Attorney Barnes,
- Spreckels' Man Neumann,
- Oregon Woods,
- Grove L. Johnson,
- High Tariff Morrow,
- Bulkhead Edgerton,
- Molasses Platform Shannon,
- Hallelujah Cox,
- Oily Gammon Gibson,
- Boss Bill Higgins,
- Smooth Aleck Badlam,
- Boss Jim Gannon,
- Slippery Tom Reynolds,
- Boss Dick Chute,
- San Quentin Ames,
- Tax Title Morehouse,
- Special Rates Reed,
- Coolie Clayton,
- Cone's Partner Kimball,
- Dan Burnes,
- Brush Dam Parks,

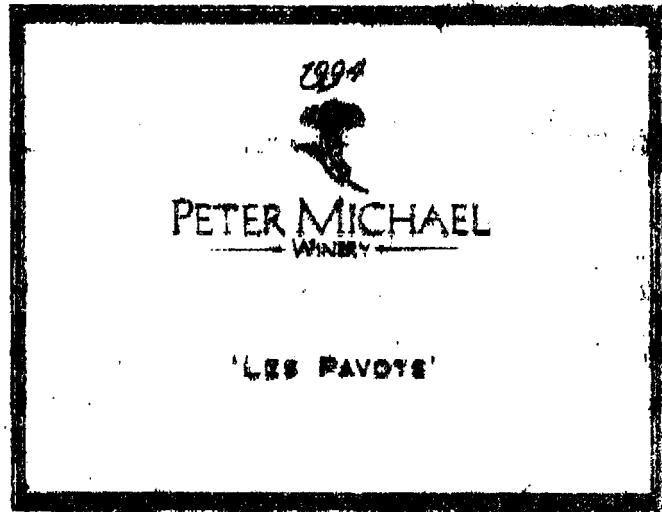
And a hundred other notable citizen famous for their devotion to anti-mono-poly principles and their intense desire to r-lieve the people from railroad oppressio. It is a beautiful procession, and as waves along let us gaze at it admiringly and listen rapturously while the editor of the Chronicle grinds the organ and Estee

Attention Nancy Sutton - from Mrs. N. N. N.

Inordinate care began with painstaking research to select rootstocks and varietal clones perfectly matched to the estate's soil and site. Chosen were classic varieties from clones treasured over time, small-clustered and valued for producing wines with the concentration and structure of a first growth.

The 16-acre Belle Côte vineyard, named for one of France's most famous ski runs and planted with three rare old-clone Chardonnays, claims the estate's highest and coolest elevations at nearly 2,000 feet above sea level. La Carrière, "the quarry," a name derived from its incredibly rocky soils, is perched just below Belle Côte. So steep is 17-acre La Carrière that its plantings of rare clones from Dijon appear to fight gravity. Next come

The soils of Les Pavots (the poppies) vineyard is volcanic in origin from Mount St. Helena. This rhyolitic soil is extremely rare in wine growing regions & prized for the unique flavors it imparts to a wine.



89% CABERNET SAUVIGNON, 10% MERLOT, 1% CABERNET FRANC  
FROM KNIGHTS VALLEY • ALCOHOL 13.9% BY VOLUME  
ESTATE BOTTLED BY PETER MICHAEL • CALISTOGA, CALIFORNIA

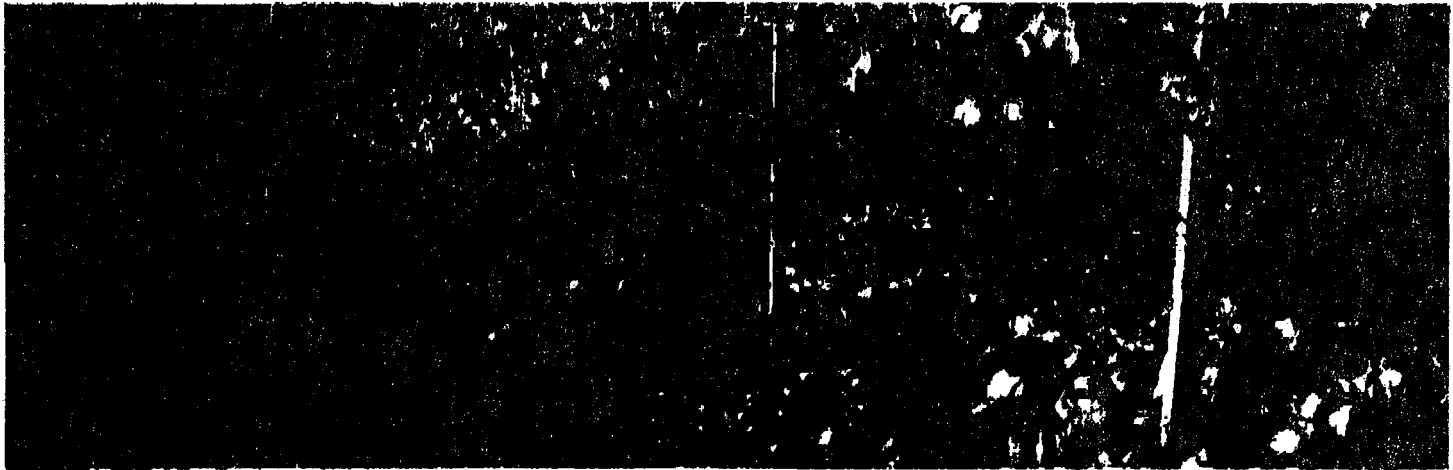
the reds, with Les Pavots, "the poppies," vineyard planted to Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Cabernet Franc at the 1,500-foot elevation.

"The cost of planting and farming our mountain vineyards is at least twice that for valley floor sites," says Aubert. "Everything is done by hand. Machines can't navigate these steep slopes."

A rarity in California, Aubert is both winemaker and vineyard manager, taking the wine from vine to grape to bottle. Aubert tends his vineyards severely, keeping the densely planted vine canopies small and growth in check. "Bonsai-ing," he calls it. The reward — deep and intense flavors.

Care continues with the harvest. Following hand picking, the clusters of grapes are hand sorted. "A painstaking and laborious practice," sighs Aubert, "but it insures that only the finest, fully matured grapes make it into the wine."

Gentle treatment continues. Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc grapes receive whole cluster pressing — "Standard procedure in Burgundy," explains Aubert — gently releasing the juice which is naturally filtered through remaining stems. Reds are equally pampered. "If you 'Cuisinart' the fruit, the subtlety and personality of the vineyard is destroyed," Aubert claims, noting that the process takes three times longer than the standard practice of



↑ Rocks





DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY  
BUREAU OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND FIREARMS

221 Main Street, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94105

June 26, 2000

Mr. Jack W. Florence, Sr., Chairman  
Rockpile Appellation Committee  
14000 Rockpile Road  
Geyserville, CA 95441

Dear Mr. Florence:

I have completed the initial review of your Rockpile American Viticultural Area (AVA) petition. Based on your information and the USGS maps, I have some questions and concerns for your attention.

1. For the proposed Rockpile AVA, please provide the size and location of all vineyards
  - partially or totally within this area, and
  - in close range to this area.

2. What is the total size of this proposed Rockpile AVA?

3. Please translate *Old Spanish "The Rocky Peak"* *La Roca Monte Rancho* from page 1 of the petition.

4. Big Foot Mountain USGS Map

OK Please see the corrected boundary line (enclosure), in accordance with your written description and in alignment with the Cloverdale USGS map.

5. Warm Springs Dam USGS Map

Please see a proposed boundary line change (enclosure), based on the need to use USGS established map markers. The cattle crossing, your point of beginning, is not a part of the USGS map. I am enclosing a copy of my written description of this revision, which extends along the 800' contour line. Please comment.

Please contact me at your convenience to discuss the questions and concerns. My phone number is 415-744-7011 and fax is 415-744-9405.

Sincerely,

N.A. Sutton, Specialist

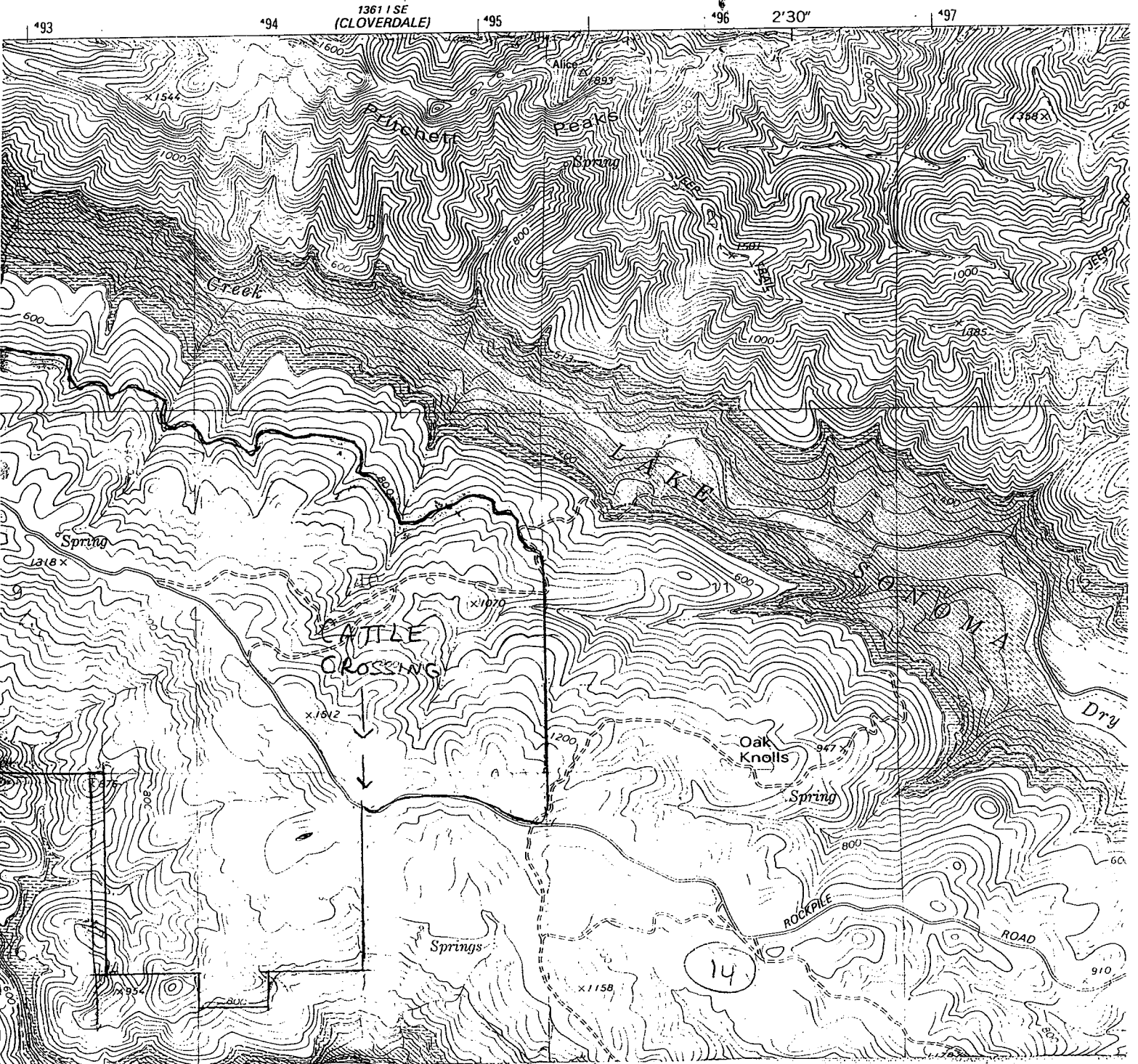
Enclosures (3)

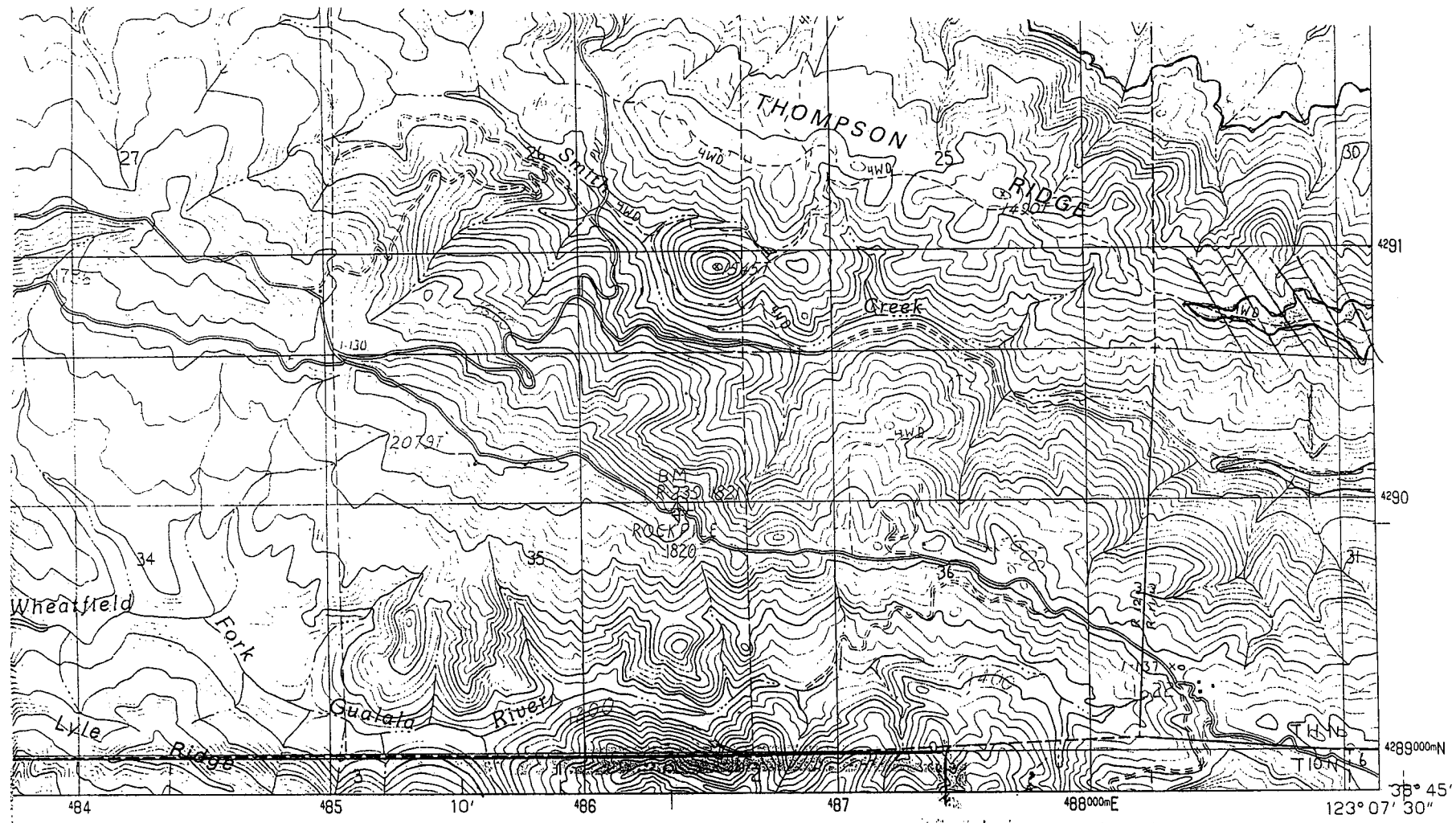
⑥ Overlap with Dry Creek AVA

WARM SPRINGS DAM MAP

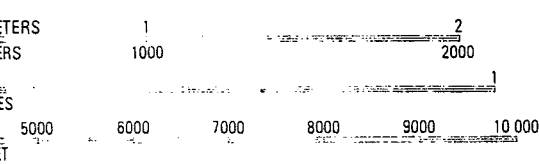
OF CALIFORNIA  
OF WATER RESOURCES

SONOMA COUNTY  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS





1:24 000  
 INTERIOR—GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA—1991



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

1	2	3	1 Ornbau Valley 2 Yorkville 3 Hopland
4		5	4 Gube Mountain 5 Cloverdale 6 Annapolis
6	7	8	7 Tombs Creek 8 Warm Springs Dam

ADJOINING 7.5' QUADRANGLE NAMES

ROAD LEGEND

- Improved Road .....
- Unimproved Road .....
- Trail .....
- Interstate Route    ◡ U. S. Route    ○ State Route

BIG FOOT MOUNTAIN, CALIFORNIA  
 PROVISIONAL EDITION 1991

38123-G2-TF-024

NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
 GEOLOGICAL SURVEY  
 RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092

43

Boundary. The Rockpile viticultural area is located in northwest Sonoma County, California.

The boundary encircles the Rockpile Ranch area, located west of Lake Sonoma.

The point of beginning is the intersection of Rockpile Road and the boundary line between Section 14 and 15, Township 10 N, Range 11 W (Warm Springs Dam Quadrangle)

Then proceed north along the Sections 15 and 10 east boundary lines to the intersection of the 800' contour line, Township 10N, Range 11 W (Warm Springs Dam Quadrangle)

Then proceed west along the 800' contour line through Sections 10, 9, 4, 5, 32 and into Section 31, Townships 10 and 11 N, Range 11 W (Warm Springs Dam and Cloverdale Quadrangles)

Then proceed west along the 800' contour line in Section 31, following the line as it reverses to the east direction, Township 11 N, Range 11 W (Big Foot Mountain Quadrangle)

Then proceed along the 800' contour line east through Sections 31, 32 and 33, and northwest through Sections 33, 32, 29 and 30, Township 11 N, Range 11 W (Cloverdale Quadrangle)

Then proceed west along the 800' contour line through Sections 30, 25, 24, 23, 14, 15, 22, 21, 20 to the intersection with the east boundary line of Section 19, Township 11 N, Range 12 W (Big Foot Mountain Quadrangle)

Then proceed south along the east boundary line of Sections 19, 30 and 31 to the intersection with the Township 11 N and 10 N boundary line, Township 11 N, Range 12 W (Big Foot Mountain Quadrangle)

Then proceed east along the Township 10 and 11 N boundary line to the intersection with the Sections 2 and 1 boundary line, Township 10 and 11 N, Range 12 W (Big Foot Mountain Quadrangle)

Then proceed south along the Section 1 west boundary line, turning east at the southwest corner of Section 1 and continuing east to Section 6, Township 10 N, Range 12 W (Big Foot Mountain and Tombs Creek Quadrangles)

Then proceed east along the south boundary of Section 6 to the intersection with Section 8, Township 10 N, Range 11 W (Tombs Creek and Warm Springs Dam Quadrangles)

Then proceed south along the west boundary of Section 8, turning east at its southwest corner and continuing east to the intersection with the 876' marker, Township 10 N, Range 11 W (Warm Springs Dam Quadrangle)

Then proceed straight south in Section 16 to the intersection with the 800' contour line  
Township 10 N, Range 11 W (Warm Springs Dam Quadrangle)

~~Then proceed south and east along the 800' contour line to its intersection with Section  
14, and continue north along the west boundary line of Section 14, returning to the point  
of beginning at Rockpile Road and the Section 14 west boundary line, Township 10 N,  
Range 11 W (Warm Springs Dam Quadrangle).~~

follow  
↓  
as it meanders  
west, SE, SW  
↑ east

Rockpile boundary lines

Dry Creek Vly boundary lines

Overlap in solid yellow

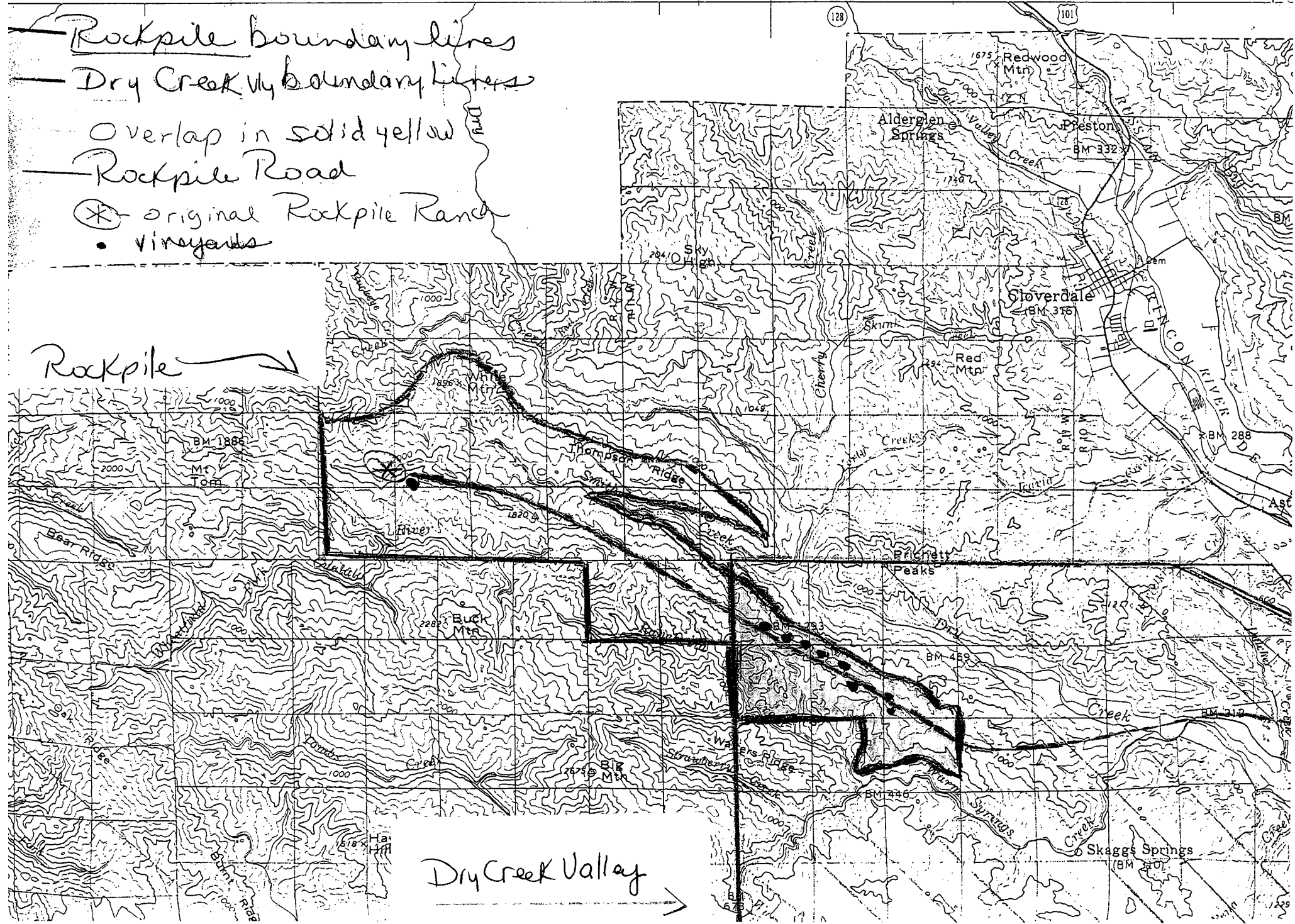
Rockpile Road

\* original Rockpile Ranch

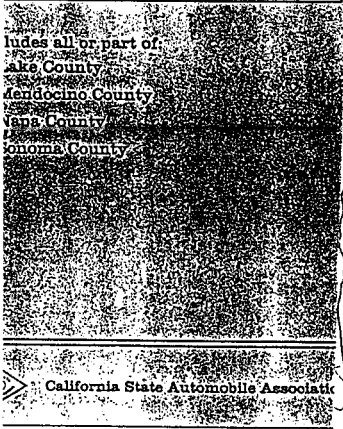
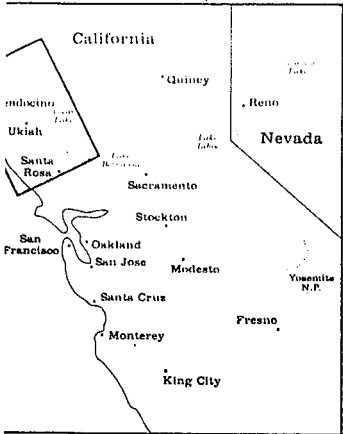
• vineyards

Rockpile →

Dry Creek Valley →

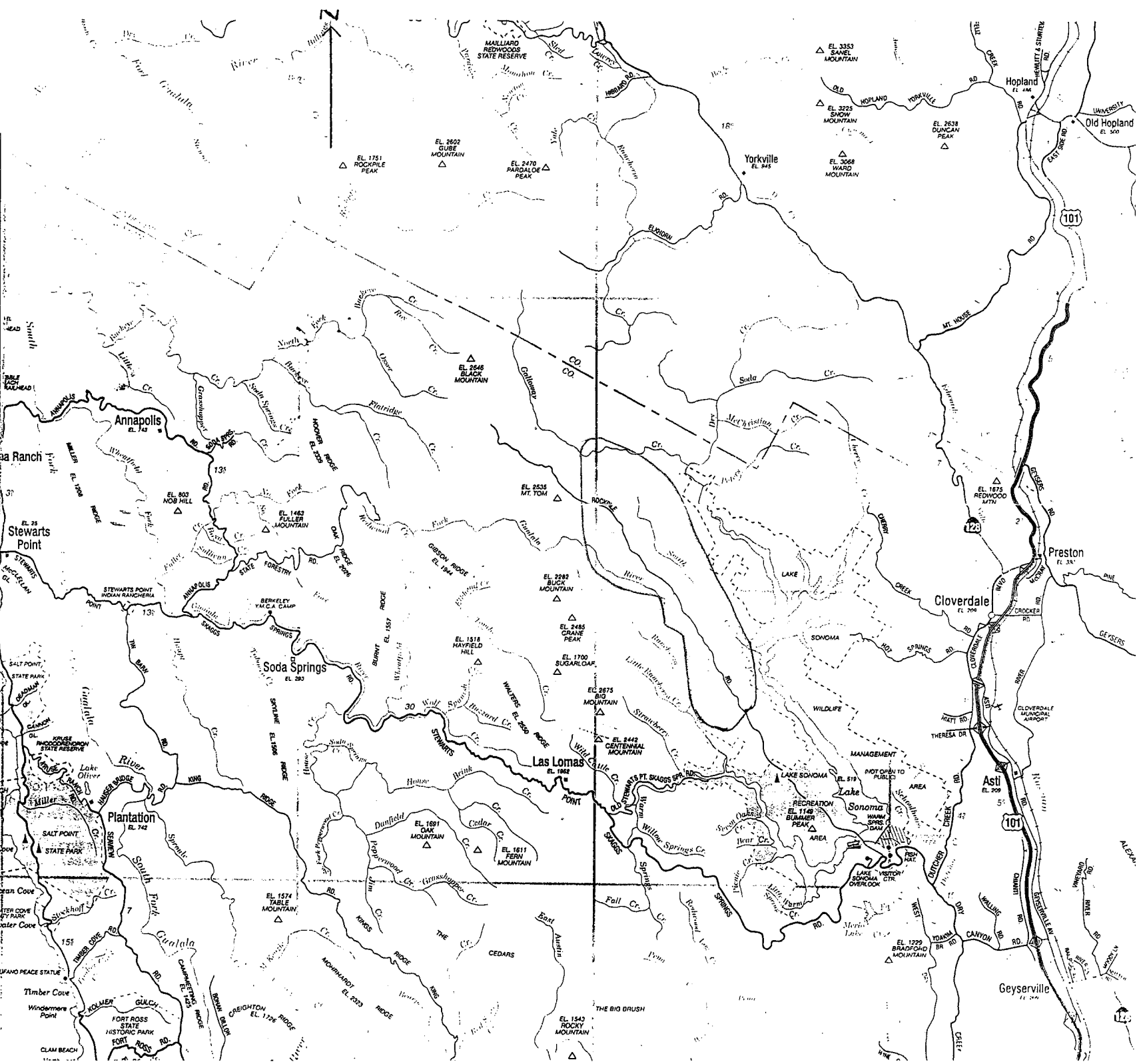


# Mendocino and Sonoma Coast Region



California State Automobile Association

Pacific





July 10, 2000

Ms. N. A. Sutton, Specialist  
Department of the Treasury - BATF  
221 Main Street, 11th Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94105

Dear Ms. Sutton:

Re: Petition for the AVA designated Rockpile - May 25, 2000

Further to our phone conversation of <sup>June</sup> July 20, and in response to your letter of June 26, 2000, please note the following:

1. the existing vineyards situated within the region for the proposed AVA are:

<u>Address Number @ Rockpile Road</u>	<u>Number of Acres</u>
1 13000*	27
2 13100*	10
3 14000	12
4 14099	13
5 14220	6
6 14300*	20
7 14600	21
8 14800	12
9 <u>18450</u>	<u>27</u>
TOTAL	148

Note that there are no vineyards outside of the proposed AVA within four to five miles of the AVA boundary.

\*These street numbers are approximate and are intended to show location only. Mailing addresses for these parcels can be provided upon request.

2. The approximate size of the AVA is 14,000 acres.

3. Literally translated LaRoca Monte Rancho means the Rocky Peak Ranch. The name never took and the early ranch was essentially always referred to as The Rockpile Ranch.



July 10, 2000  
Ms. N.A. Sutton  
Dept. of the Treasury-BATF

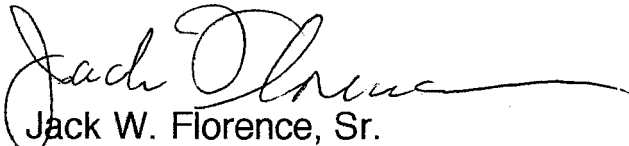
Page 2

4. Your correction is correct. Sorry.

5. Your proposed revision is a good one and acceptable to the Rockpile Appellation Committee, with one minor addition. We suggest that the last paragraph in your property description should include the words "...."momentarily west then ...." added immediately after the words "Then proceed \_\_\_\_\_." Any other expression, describing the initial direction to take along the indicated 800 foot contour line would be acceptable.

Your prompt and professional manner in handling this AVA petition is greatly appreciated. We look forward to working with you further in this matter.

Very truly yours,



Jack W. Florence, Sr.  
Chairman,  
Rockpile Appellation Committee

**Rockpile**  
**An AVA petition**  
**July 19, 2000, meeting**

Location: Healdsburg Public Library, Healdsburg, CA

Attendees: Mr. Jack Florence, Sr., the petitioner  
Nancy Sutton, ATF Specialist

Purposes

- Review the boundary changes
- Discuss the Dry Creek Valley AVA overlap
- Pinpoint the vineyards within, and those surrounding, the petitioned area
- Inform the petitioner of the timeframe for petition processing

A minor boundary change has been agreed upon in an effort to keep the noted guideposts consistent with the USGS map references. The southern most boundary on the Warm Spring Dam Quad map, sections 16 and 15, has been extended south along the 800' elevation line.

The Dry Creek Valley AVA overlap is of concern to the Mr. Florence. He feels the overlapping section is not consistent with the balance of the Dry Creek Valley AVA, which has lower elevations and fewer mountains. He believes this area more accurately reflects the entire Rockpile petitioned area. Mr. Florence stated the Dry Creek Valley vineyard owners are aware of his Rockpile effort and are not against this new AVA. Eight of the nine vineyards in the proposed AVA are currently in the Dry Creek Valley AVA. I explained I do not know how this overlap will be viewed in Headquarters, or how it might affect the potential for petition approval.

The nine vineyards within the proposed AVA have been listed on Mr. Florence's letter of July 10, 2000, and marked by him on the Warm Springs Dam and Big Foot Mountain USGS maps. The letter also indicates, and was re-stated by Mr. Florence during the meeting, that there are no vineyards within 4-5 miles of the perimeter of the petitioned area.

The lengthy processing time for AVA petitions was discussed with Mr. Florence. I explained, "not this harvest, but maybe next harvest." He understands.

*Jack W. Florence, Sr. - Chairman  
Rockpile Appellation Committee*

14000 Rockpile Road  
Geyserville, CA 95441  
Phone:(707) 433-6844  
Fax: (707) 431-9102

October 20, 2000

Nancy Sutton  
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms  
221 Main Street - 11th Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94105

Dear Ms. Sutton:

I've enclosed a section of the Award Book from the 2000 Sonoma County Harvest Fair wine competition. Needless to say, those of us up on the ridge were pleased that the Rockpile area will receive even more widespread recognition as a result of the recent showing of one of our Zinfandels.

Hopefully our petition is making its way through the BATF system. if we can be of further assistance, please let me know.

Sincerely,

  
Jack Florence

Geyser Peak Winery ..... 1997 Sonoma County Reserve \$32.00  
 Geysers Peak Winery ..... 1998 Sonoma County Reserve \$32.00  
 Golden Creek ..... 1998 Sonoma County Reserve \$25.00  
     Ladi's Vyd  
 Sable Ridge Vineyard ..... 1998 Sonoma County \$28.00  
 Windsor Vineyards ..... 1998 Sonoma County Reserve \$15.00  
**ZINFANDEL Up to \$17.99 ..... 38 entries**

**SILVER**

Barefoot Reserve ..... 1998 Sonoma County \$14.99  
 Dry Creek Vineyard ..... 1998 Sonoma County \$15.00  
     Heritage Clone  
 Lake Sonoma Winery .... 1997 Dry Creek Valley \$16.00  
 Mietz Cellars ..... 1998 Russian River Valley \$17.99  
     Bacchi Vyd.  
 Pedroncelli Winery ..... 1998 Dry Creek Valley \$13.50  
     Mother Clone  
 Peterson Winery ..... 1998 Dry Creek Valley \$17.50  
 Sebastiani Vineyards .... 1998 Sonoma County \$17.99  
     Old Vines  
 Seghesio Winery ..... 1999 Sonoma County \$14.50  
 Topolos ..... 1998 Russian River Valley \$16.00  
     Bella Lisa  
 Topolos ..... 1998 Russian River Valley \$16.50  
     Piner Heights  
 Trentadue Winery ..... 1998 Sonoma County \$14.00

**BRONZE**

Alderbrook Winery ..... 1998 Sonoma County OVOC \$17.50  
 Armida Winery ..... 1999 Dry Creek Valley \$16.00  
     Copia's Kiss  
 Belvedere Winery ..... 1997 Dry Creek Valley \$17.00  
 Chateau Souverain ..... 1998 Dry Creek Valley \$13.00  
 Clos Du Bois ..... 1998 Sonoma County \$14.75  
 Domaine St. George ..... 1998 Chalk Hill \$16.99  
     Premiere Cuvee  
 Domaine St. George ..... 1998 Dry Creek Valley \$16.99  
     Premiere Cuvee Wells Vyds  
 Gallo Of Sonoma ..... 1997 Dry Creek Valley \$11.00  
 Geysers Peak Winery ..... 1998 Sonoma County \$17.00  
 Homewood Winery ..... 1996 Russian River Valley \$17.50  
 Homewood Winery ..... 1996 Sonoma Valley \$16.00  
     Kunde Vyd  
 Homewood Winery ..... 1997 Russian River Valley \$17.50  
 Homewood Winery ..... 1997 Sonoma Valley \$17.99  
     Kunde Vyd  
 Kenwood Vineyards ..... 1998 Sonoma County \$15.00  
 Kunde Estate Winery .... 1998 Sonoma Valley \$15.00  
 The Meeker Vineyard ..... 1997 Dry Creek Valley \$17.00  
 Murphy-Goode Estate ..... 1998 Sonoma County \$17.00  
 Pedroncelli Winery ..... 1996 Dry Creek Valley \$14.50  
     Pedroni-Bushnell

Rancho Zabacco ..... 1998 Sonoma County \$13.00  
     Sonoma Heritage Vines  
 Ravenswood Winery ..... 1998 Sonoma County \$15.25  
 Sausal Winery ..... 1998 Alexander Valley \$14.00  
 Sunce' ..... 1997 Dry Creek Valley \$17.99  
 Valley Of The Moon Winery  
     ..... 1997 Sonoma County \$15.00  
 Windsor Vineyards ..... 1997 Alexander Valley \$17.00  
     Shelton Series

**ZINFANDEL \$18.00 and over ..... 77 entries**

**SWEESTAKES RED**

Hartford ..... 1998 Russian River Valley \$28.00  
     Fanucchi-Wood Road

**GOLD**

Gary Farrell Wines ..... 1998 Dry Creek Valley \$28.00  
     Bradford Mtn  
 Mayo Family Winery .... 1999 Russian River Valley \$30.00  
     Old Vines Reserve Ricci Vyd  
 Rosenblum Cellars ..... 1998 Dry Creek Valley \$19.00  
     Rockpile Road Vyd

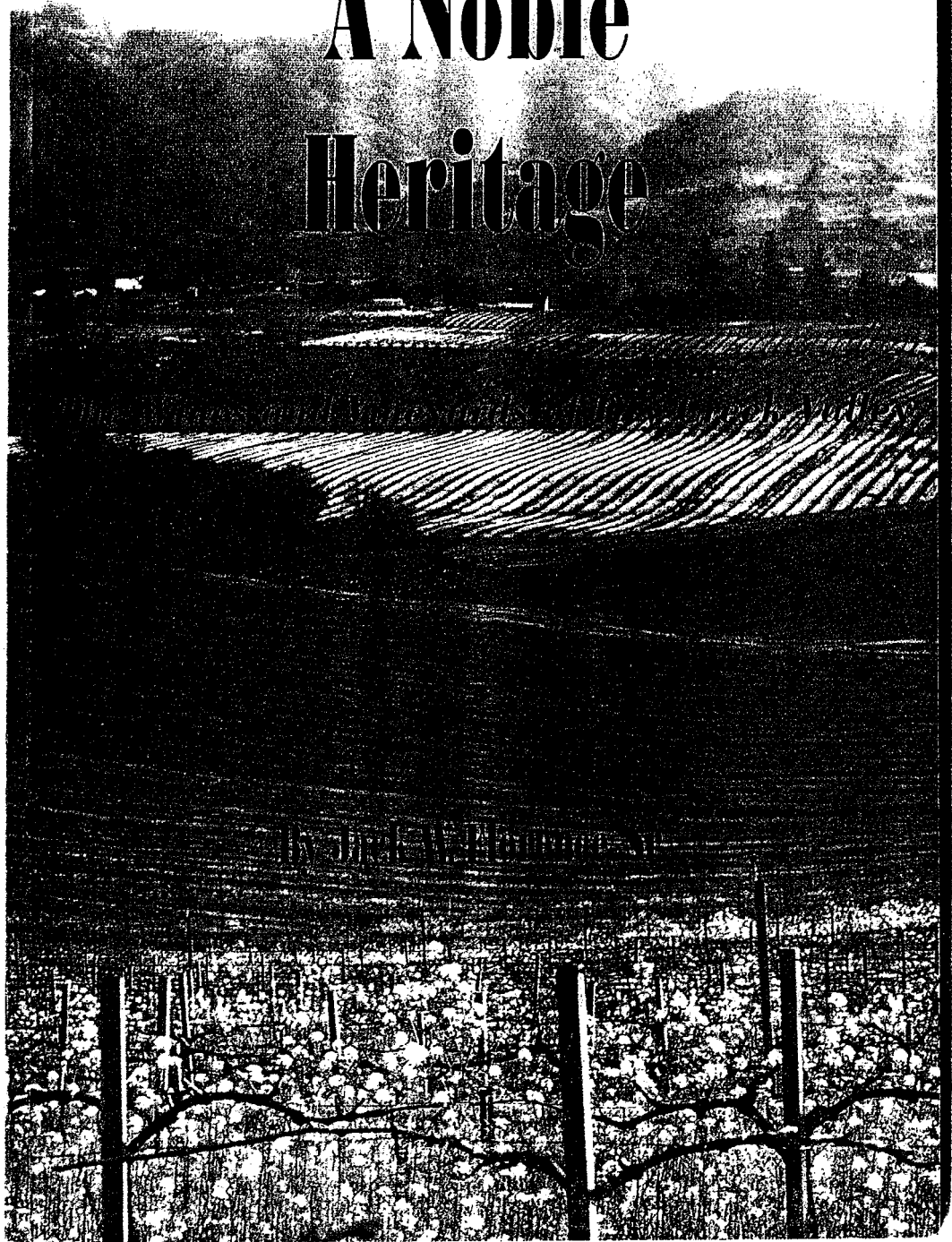
**SILVER**

Alexander Valley Vyds. ... 1999 Alexander Valley \$20.00  
     Sin Zin  
 Battaglini Winery ..... 1998 Russian Rvr Vly Reserve \$24.00  
 Battaglini Winery ..... 1998 Russian River Valley \$20.00  
     Twin Pines Ranch  
 David Coffaro ..... 1999 Dry Creek Valley \$21.00  
 Dry Creek Vineyard ..... 1997 Dry Creek Vly Reserve \$30.00  
 Everett Ridge Vyds. .... 1998 Dry Creek Valley \$22.00  
 Gundlach-Bundschu ..... 1998 Sonoma Valley \$22.00  
     Rhinefarm Vyd  
 Handley Cellars ..... 1998 Dry Creek Valley \$25.00  
     Elissa Vyd  
 Haywood ..... 1997 Sonoma Valley \$28.95  
     Morning Sun  
 Kenwood Vineyards ..... 1998 Alexander Valley \$20.00  
     Mazzoni  
 Kenwood Vineyards ..... 1998 Sonoma Valley \$20.00  
     Nuns Canyon  
 Rosenblum Cellars ..... 1998 Sonoma County \$40.00  
     St. Peter's Church  
 Rosenblum Cellars ..... 1998 Russian River Valley \$25.00  
     Alegria Vyd  
 Russian Hill Estate ..... 1998 Russian River Valley \$18.00

**BRONZE**

Acom Winery ..... 1998 Russian River Valley \$25.00  
     Alegria Vyds  
 Alderbrook Winery ..... 1998 Sonoma County Reserve \$27.00  
 De Loach Vineyards ..... 1999 Russian River Vly OFS \$40.00

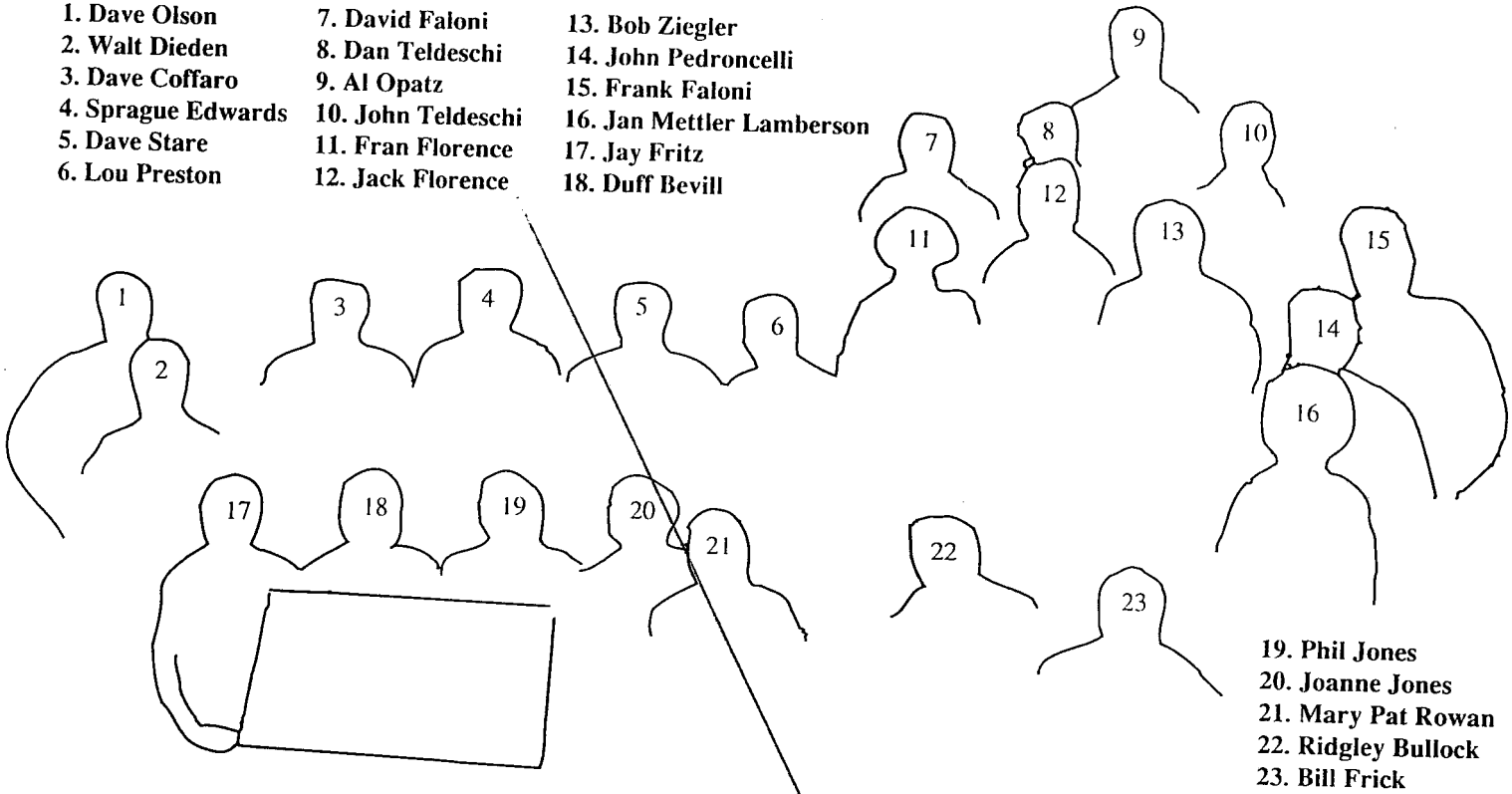
# A Noble Heritage



- 1. Dave Olson
- 2. Walt Dieden
- 3. Dave Coffaro
- 4. Sprague Edwards
- 5. Dave Stare
- 6. Lou Preston

- 7. David Faloni
- 8. Dan Teldeschi
- 9. Al Opatz
- 10. John Teldeschi
- 11. Fran Florence
- 12. Jack Florence

- 13. Bob Ziegler
- 14. John Pedroncelli
- 15. Frank Faloni
- 16. Jan Mettler Lamberson
- 17. Jay Fritz
- 18. Duff Bevill



- 19. Phil Jones
- 20. Joanne Jones
- 21. Mary Pat Rowan
- 22. Ridgley Bullock
- 23. Bill Frick

FIGURE 11—DRY CREEK VALLEY  
VINTNERS AND GROWERS—OCTOBER 1992



# TOMBS CREEK VINEYARDS

Office: 1329 Solano Avenue, Albany, CA 94706 Tel: 510-524-4820 Fax: 510-524-5632

June 27, 2001

Ms. Nancy Sutton  
Regulations Division  
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms  
221 Main Street, 11<sup>th</sup> floor  
San Francisco, CA 94105

RE: Proposed Rockpile Viticultural Area (2000R-436P), Notice No. 916

Dear Ms. Sutton;

We have reviewed the proposed Rockpile Viticultural Area (2000R-436P) and noted that its proposed boundaries directly border 2 additional vineyards. On behalf of Tombs Creek Vineyards and Sonoma Royale Vineyard, we request that the current petition for a Rockpile AVA (Notice No. 916) be amended to include our respective vineyard locations.

Tombs Creek Vineyards was established in 1988 and the first grapes planted in 1997. The vineyard is located within Sections 15 and 22 of the Tombs Creek Quadrangle. We have five acres planted in Cabernet Sauvignon with an additional thirty acres cleared and being prepared for planting over the next four years.

Tombs Creek Vineyards directly borders the southwestern boundary of the proposed Rockpile AVA.

Sonoma Royale Vineyards was established in 1997 and the first grapes planted in 1997. Its present vineyard occupies approximately 26 acres of which 14 acres are in Cabernet Sauvignon and 12 acres of Merlot. It is located within Section 7, USGS map Tombs Creek Quadrangle.

Sonoma Royale Vineyards directly borders the southwestern boundary of the proposed AVA.

Both our vineyards are located at elevations ranging from 1000 to 1900 feet and are subject to a climate that is distinguished from surrounding areas by Spring daytime temperatures that run five to ten degrees cooler than the nearby Healdsburg and Dry Creek Valley areas. The cool prevailing northwesterly spring breezes, which are not as prevalent at the lower elevations of the protected valley floors, increase the cooling effect and this in turn creates a delayed bud break and slower growth, resulting in delayed bloom and fruit set. Our summer weather is slightly warmer than the area valleys due to

#1  
p. 2 of 3

# TOMBS CREEK VINEYARDS

Office: 1329 Solano Avenue, Albany, CA 94706 Tel: 510-524-4820 Fax: 510-524-5632

less fog and more clear weather, resulting in increased sunshine and warmer temperatures. On days when the marine inversion is shallower than 1,000 feet, our vineyards are well above the fog. Fall night temperatures, as stated in the petition, can be warmer than in the surrounding areas, with less fog at 800' and above than at lower elevations. The crucial grape ripening period of September and early October is generally warmer and drier in our locality than in surrounding viticultural areas.

Our soils are characterized by a relative absence of silt and sand, higher oxidized iron properties (red color), and clay subsoil. The topsoil, generally loam to clay loam with a red to brown color has areas of small rock and gravel mixed in the topsoil, some with outcroppings of larger rock. The subsoil is more clay-like in texture; but the topography and the presence of shale and sandstone, results in well-drained vineyard conditions.

Growing grapes on the steep hillsides of the hinterlands of Sonoma County is not an easy proposition. We feel that our unique climate and location gives us a unique and highly prized wine grape that will be treasured.

Inasmuch as both vineyards directly border the proposed Rockpile AVA boundaries and share all the characteristics of soil, climate, elevation and geographic features we respectfully request that the southern boundaries of the proposed Rockpile viticultural area be extended so that Tombs Creek Vineyards and Sonoma Royale Vineyards are included in the proposed Rockpile viticultural area.

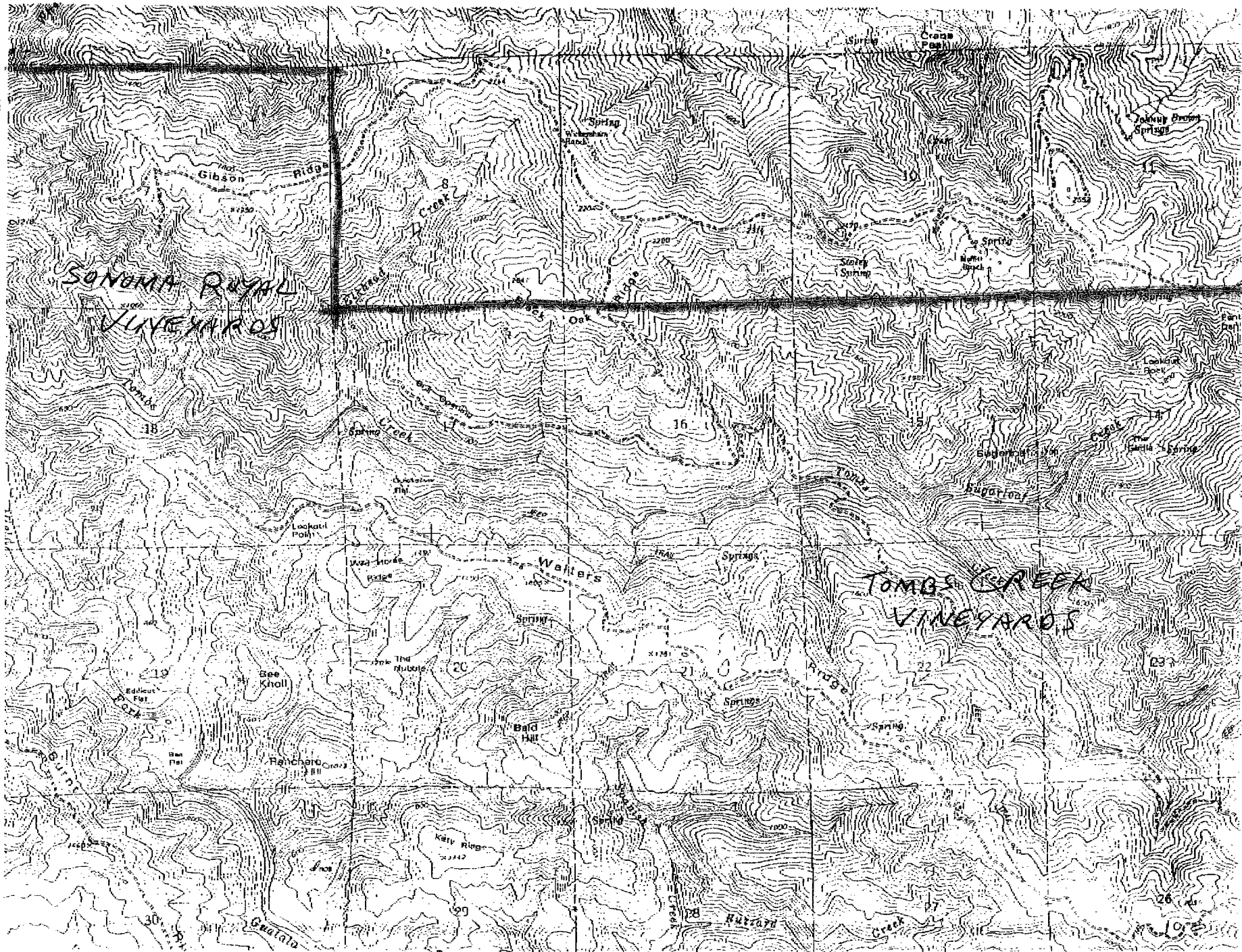
The boundaries set forth in the proposed Rockpile AVA run on the north and east side of Section 7 (Tombs Creek Quadrangle) and on the north side of Section 15. Tombs Creek Vineyards lies in Section 15 and in Section 22 (which is the Section on the south side of Section 15.) Sonoma Royale Vineyard lies in Section 7. I would suggest that the boundary be changed to include these three sections. For the sake of simplicity and uniformity the boundary could be drawn as shown on the enclosed map, which would encompass the Walters Ridge area or in the alternative just to include Sections 7, 15 and 22.

Thank you for your consideration,



Peter Beall  
Tombs Creek Vineyards





T 1  
P 3 of 3

Notice # 916 - Comment # 2

ART VIRAMONTES  
SONOMA ROYALE VINEYARD, LLC  
P. O. BOX 35  
CLOVERDALE, CA 95425

NANCY SUTTON  
REGULATIONS DIVISION  
BUREAU OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND FIREARMS  
221 MAIN STREET, 11<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR  
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94105

JUNE 26, 2001

RE: PROPOSED ROCKPILE VITICULTURE AREA (2000R-436P)

~~DEAR MS. SUTTON,~~

I am joining Peter Beall of Tombs Creek Vineyards in requesting that the proposed Rockpile Viticultural Area be amended to include our two vineyards.

Both of our vineyards border the proposed Rockpile AVA and share the same soil, climate and elevation features as set forth in the AVA petition.

The elevation of Sonoma Royale Vineyard runs from a low of 1600 feet to a high of 1900 feet. We have planted 12 acres in Merlot and 14 acres in Cabernet Sauvignon since we started in 1997. We share the commitment of the other vineyards in the Rockpile AVA to the production of super-high quality grapes as demanded by our unique climate and rugged hillside terrain.

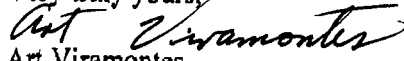
The boundaries as set in the petition as they pertain to us state: "(9) Then proceed east along the south boundary of Section 6 to the intersection with Section 8, Township 10N, Range 11 W (Tombs Creek and Warm Springs Dam Quadrangles); (10) Then proceed south along the west boundary of Section 8, turning east at its southwest corner and continuing east..."

Sonoma Royale is located in Section 7 of the Tombs Creek Quadrangle. The proposed boundaries run on the north side of Section 7 and turn to run along the east side of Section 7.

I propose that the boundaries of the Rockpile AVA be amended to include Section 7 along with Sections 15 and 22 where the Tombs Creek Vineyards are located.

I am available for any questions that you may have. I can be reached at 707 477-4792.

Very truly yours,

  
Art Viramontes

# TOMBS CREEK VINEYARDS

Office: 1329 Solano Avenue, Albany, CA 94706 Tel: 510-524-4820 Fax: 510-524-5632

July 10, 2001

Ms. Nancy Sutton  
Regulations Division  
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms  
221 Main Street, 11<sup>th</sup> floor  
San Francisco, CA 94105

RE: Proposed Rockpile Viticultural Area (2000R-436P), Notice No. 916

Dear Ms. Sutton;

I must inform you that I have made a major mistake. I am guilty of miss-reading the maps and the listed boundaries in the proposed Rockpile AVA application.

I was acting under the incorrect assumption that the proposed boundaries of the Rockpile AVA directly bordered my neighbor Art Viramontes and came within one-half of a mile from my vineyard. I incorrectly assumed that one-half of the area known as the Wickersham Ranch was included in the proposed AVA.

While I did not intend to make this mistake, I am still responsible for any and all additional burdens that this mistake may have caused all the participants.

Please retract my earlier letter, which requested the change in boundaries. It does not make any sense to have the proposed boundaries as set forth in the original application changed to include my vineyard.

Please also note that I continue to be a supporter of the Rockpile AVA and must add that I have greatly enjoyed the unique Zinfandel and Petit Syrah wines produced by Rosenblum with the Rockpile designation.

Very truly yours,



Peter Beall

-----Original Message-----

From: Gary Branham [SMTP:gbranham@earthlink.net]  
Sent: October 31, 2001 9:23 PM  
To: nprm@atfhq.atr.treas.gov  
Subject: <no subject>

To whom it may concern,  
From: Gary Branham  
33 Arch Way Calistoga, Ca 94515  
E- mail gbranham@earthlink.net  
Notice No. 916

Dear BATF, I am writing to you in regards to the proposed new AVA "Rockpile". I own a small vineyard on a ranch I own in or near the proposed AVA. I realize the date for comments has passed but I just heard of the proposal today, Oct. 31 2001. I ask you to please consider my comments as I have a vested interest in the proposed AVA. I purchased my 250 Ac. ranch in 1989, this parcel was one of many that were part of the original "Rockpile Ranch". I began ground work in 1993 and planted my vineyard in 1994. The first wine was made in 1999 and I called my vineyard "Branham Rockpile" as a vineyard designation. The wine brand that produced and bottled the wine from my vineyard only makes vineyard designated wines. On June 21 2001 the BATF approved the label . The label is GALLERON Sonoma County Zinfandel Branham Rockpile. My concern is that I can continue to call my vineyard "Branham Rockpile". This concern exists regardless on whether I am in or out of the AVA. I hope you will give my concern your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Gary Branham

Sutton, Nancy A.

From: (b) (6)  
Sent: Thursday, November 01, 2001 12:42 PM  
To: Sutton, Nancy A.  
Subject: FW: Rockpile AVA

Here is another comment on Rockpile.

(b) (5) (b) (5)

(b) (5)  
(b) (6)

Regulations Division  
(b) (6)

-----Original Message-----

From: Gary Branham [SMTP:gbranham@earthlink.net]  
Sent: November 01, 2001 3:34 PM  
To: nprm@atfhq.atf.treas.gov  
Subject: Rockpile AVA

To whom it may concern,  
From: Gary Branham  
33 Arch Way Calistoga, CA, 94515  
E-mail gbranham@earthlink.net  
Notice No. 916

Dear BATF, This note is a follow up to my comments about the proposed Rockpile AVA. I realize the comment period has expired but I do feel I have legitimate concerns. I feel there are several inconsistencies that I would like to address.

1. This AVA would impact at least two small entities: Galleron Signature Wines and Branham Rockpile Vineyard.
  2. The name Rockpile has been used for many years, this would essentially remove it from some previous uses. I have been calling my ranch Rockpile since 1989 when I purchased part of the original Rockpile Ranch.
  3. The overlapping of Rockpile AVA and Dry Creek AVA seems misleading.
  4. The statement that the Rockpile 3 Ranch was 18000 acres and the Rockpile AVA of 14000 acres encompasses Rockpile 3 seems misleading.
  5. That the elevation of 800' is the low point of the AVA seems arbitrary.
- I thank you for your consideration and look forward to continued dialog.

Sincerely,  
Gary Branham

To whom it may concern:

From: Gary Branham

33 Arch Way Calistoga, CA 94515

E-mail [gbranham@earthlink.net](mailto:gbranham@earthlink.net)

Notice No. 916

Dear BATF,

I am sending you a copy of the letter I sent to the Chief, Regulations Division. I would like you to consider these comments in regards to the proposed AVA Rockpile.

Dear Chief, Regulations Division,

I am writing to you to petition a change in a proposed new AVA. The new AVA is Rockpile, located in NW Sonoma Co. CA. I understand it is in the queue to be published in a short time. I did not hear of this proposal until Oct. 31 2001. I have sent comments to the BATF and I hope they will be considered.

My petition to change the proposed AVA concerns the name but I have several general considerations as well.

The name Rockpile referees to the original Rockpile Ranch, it does not refer to the area along Rockpile road, which traverses approximately twelve miles from the end of Dry Creek road to the Rockpile Ranch. All of the proposed AVA is along Rockpile road with only part of the proposed AVA located within the boundaries of the Rockpile Ranch.

I purchased part of the original Rockpile Ranch [referred to in the proposal] in 1989; I planted a vineyard in 1994 and referred to my vineyard as Branham Rockpile. This was done to distinguish my vineyard from the rest of the Rockpile Ranch, which is now divided into many parcels with many owners.

In 1999 Galleron Signature Wines of Rutherford CA produced the first commercial wine from Branham Rockpile. This wine brand only produces vineyard designated wines and used the name Branham Rockpile as the designation of my vineyard. The label was approved by the BATF June 21 2001; the wine was released soon after and now is in the marketplace. Two more vintages are in the pipeline with the 2000 to be bottled in Jan. 2002.

If the name Rockpile is approved for the AVA and made into a rule will I be able to continue to use my name Branham Rockpile and retain my intellectual property? If I were allowed to continue using Branham Rockpile, would the use of the AVA Rockpile and Branham Rockpile not cause confusion to the very consumer the AVA rule tries to educate? If I am unable to continue using my name Branham Rockpile, I feel this would have a significant impact on at least two small entities, Galleron Signature Wines and Branham Rockpile.

As for general considerations to the proposed new AVA I have several. 1. The overlapping of Rockpile AVA and Dry Creek AVA would dilute both AVA's and question any special significance of the area which is overlapped. 2. The lower elevation requirement of 800' seems arbitrary. 3. It is stated in the proposal that with an increase in

elevation of 1000' the temperature decreases by six degrees. This would lead one to believe that the higher elevations [1900'] of the new AVA would be significantly cooler than the lower elevations [800']. If this is true then the proposed AVA has major climatic differences from the higher elevation to the lower elevation. 4. The erroneous statement the AVA encompasses Rockpile 3 [a ranch of 18000 Ac.] yet only contains 14000Ac. The ranch I purchased was part of Rockpile 3 yet my parcel is out of the AVA. 4. The erroneous statement that the proposed boundary encircles the Rockpile Ranch area.

I have been a commercial winemaker for 25 years and understand the desire of many to put our viticulture on a par with France and other winemaking regions of the world by establishing appellations. The appellations we try to emulate are decades, often centuries old. Are we being presumptuous in trying to legitimize a viticultural region that is barely 10 years old?

I thank you for taking the time to read my petition

Sincerely,  
Gary Branham

33 Arch Way  
Calistoga, CA 94515  
707 942 5704  
E-mail [gbranham@earthlink.net](mailto:gbranham@earthlink.net) Fax 707 963 8762

Chief, Regulations Division  
Bureau of ATF  
Washington, DC  
Notice No. 916

Nov. 6, 2001

WHT  
12/2

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you to petition a change in a proposed new AVA. The new AVA is Rockpile, located in NW Sonoma Co. CA. I understand it is in the queue to be published in a short time. I did not hear of this proposal until Oct. 31 2001. I have sent comments to the BATF and I hope they will be considered.

My petition to change the proposed AVA concerns the name, but I have several general considerations as well.

The name Rockpile refers to the original Rockpile Ranch, it does not refer to the area along Rockpile road, which traverses approximately twelve miles from the end of Dry Creek road to the Rockpile Ranch. All of the proposed AVA is along Rockpile road with only part of the proposed AVA located within the boundaries of the Rockpile Ranch.

I purchased part of the original Rockpile Ranch [referred to in the proposal] in 1989; I planted a vineyard in 1994 and referred to my vineyard as Branham Rockpile. This was done to distinguish my vineyard from the rest of the Rockpile Ranch, which is now divided into many parcels with many owners.

In 1999 Galleron Signature Wines of Rutherford CA produced the first commercial wine from Branham Rockpile. This wine brand only produces vineyard designated wines and used the name Branham Rockpile as the designation of my vineyard. The label was approved by the BATF June 21 2001; the wine was released soon after and now is in the marketplace. Two more vintages are in the pipeline with the 2000 to be bottled in Jan. 2002.

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I thank you for taking the time to read my petition

Sincerely,

Gary Branham



33 Arch Way

Calistoga, CA 94515

707 942 5704

E-mail [gbranham@earthlink.net](mailto:gbranham@earthlink.net)

Fax 707 963 8762



Chief, Regulations Division  
Bureau of ATF  
Washington, DC

WWT  
11/2/02

Nov. 6, 2001

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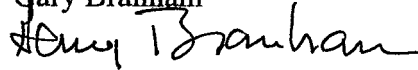
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I have been a commercial winemaker for 25 years and understand the desire of many to put our viticulture on a par with France and other winemaking regions of the world by establishing appellations. The appellations we try to emulate are decades, often centuries old. Are we being presumptuous in trying to legitimize a viticultural region that is barely 10 years old?

I thank you for taking the time to read my petition

Sincerely,

Gary Branham



33 Arch Way

Calistoga, CA 94515

707 942 5704

E-mail [gbranham@earthlink.net](mailto:gbranham@earthlink.net)

Fax 707 963 8762



N.A. Sutton,  
Specialist, Regulations Division  
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms  
San Francisco, CA.  
Fax: 415-947-5191

Dear Nancy,

Regarding the location and conditions of my ranch and vineyard I submit this information and state to you it is true and accurate to the best of my experience and knowledge.

The ranch is located entirely inside the boundaries of the original Rockpile Ranch #3. The access road is Rockpile road and the ranch is located 3.1 miles by road from the north boundary of Rockpile Vineyard.

The ranch has an elevation of 860 ft. at the lowest point and 1700 ft. at the highest point.

The ranch is mostly of southern exposure with some southwest and southeast.

The climate would be similar to the Rockpile Vineyard. The summer temperature is approximately 5-10 degrees F cooler than Healdsburg CA. Due to the higher elevation, the temperature often varies inversely to the lower Dry Creek Valley. When it is cold and foggy in the lower elevation it is usually sunny and warmer at Branham Rockpile. When it is very hot in the lower elevation it is usually cooler at Branham Rockpile. These climatic conditions lead to a budbreak about two to three weeks later than the valley with harvest occurring one to two weeks later than the lower valley locations.

In regards to the soils at the ranch I would state that they are similar to the proposed Rockpile AVA. The soil is mostly light brown to dark red brown loam with some shale loam and silt loam. It is moderately acidic to strongly acidic, contains small and large rock, shale, gravel and is well drained. There are many large rock outcroppings and the ranch would be considered rocky by most standards.

Sincerely,



Gray Branham

1101  
A+T



EXECUTIVE  
ASSISTANT

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY  
BUREAU OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND FIREARMS  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20226

JAN 1 2002

Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator  
One Post Street  
Suite 2450  
San Francisco, California 94104

Dear Senator Feinstein:

This is in response to your letter dated December 3, 2001, concerning your constituent, Mr. Gary Branham. Mr. Branham is concerned about the new Rockpile viticultural area located close to his vineyard, and the Rockpile name used on wine labels.

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) has reached an equitable solution with Mr. Branham to include his vineyard property in the new Rockpile viticultural area. This inclusion will allow Mr. Branham to continue using the Rockpile name on his wine labels. On December 13, 2001, ATF met with Mr. Branham to confirm that the Rockpile viticultural area will include his vineyard property.

We hope this information proves helpful in responding to your constituent. Please let me know if we may be of further assistance.

Sincerely yours,

**SIGNED BY**  
**LEWIS P. RADEN**

Lewis P. Raden  
Executive Assistant to the Director  
Legislative Affairs

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0504

<http://feinstein.senate.gov>

December 3, 2001

*fax to  
leg Affairs*

*AB 12/11/01*

Director  
Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms  
221 Main Street 11th Floor  
San Francisco, California 94105-1992

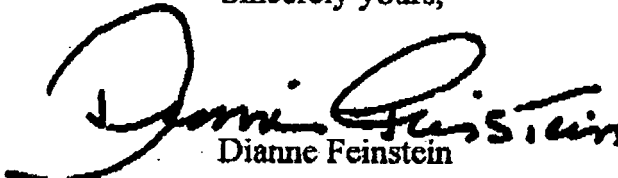
Dear Director:

I am writing to bring to your attention a letter from Gary Branham regarding his concerns with a proposed name change for a viticultural area where his vineyard is located. Please look into the issues raised, as quickly as possible, so I can appropriately respond to Mr. Branham.

Attached you will find the enclosures from my constituent to assist you with your review. After you have completed your review, please send your written response to Masha Kaminskaya of my San Francisco office. Ms. Kaminskaya may be contacted at (415) 393-0707 if you have any questions.

With warmest personal regards.

Sincerely yours,

  
Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator

DF:mk  
cc: Gary Branham

Sen. Feinstein  
c/o Polly Kaiser

Dear Polly,

My name is Gary Branham and I am writing to you in regards to a problem I have with the BATF and the Dept. of the Treasury.

I own a small vineyard in NW Sonoma Co. My ranch was once part of a larger Rockpile Ranch and I purchased my parcel in 1989. I planted my vineyard in 1994 and called it Branham Rockpile. The first wine was produced in 1999 and bottled in 2001 under the GALLERON brand. This wine brand only bottles wines that are vineyard designated and used the name of Branham Rockpile as the designation. The label was approved June 21 2001 by the BATF.

On Oct 31 2001 I became aware of a proposed AVA [ viticultural area] to be called Rockpile, I commented to the BATF but my comments were made after the deadline.

The BATF told me the AVA was in the queue to be published in two months and would become a rule in four months.

My problems are several. First I feel there was insufficient posting of the proposed AVA. Second I have been using the name Branham Rockpile and feel my intellectual property will be diluted even if I am permitted to use my name. This will have a severe impact on two small entities, Branham Rockpile and Galleron Signature Wines. I also have several general problems with the proposed AVA that I gave to the BATF.

I am writing you as a citizen of CA. I ask you to help me pull this proposal from the queue so my comments to the BATF can be given fair consideration.

I thank you for your time.

Sincerely,



Gary Branham

33 Arch Way Calistoga CA. 94515

707 942 5704

E-mail: [gbranham@earthlink.net](mailto:gbranham@earthlink.net)

Fax 707 963 8762