



*Sonoma County currently faces an unprecedented surge of hospitality/tourism development centered around an excess of Wine Tourism. Agricultural preservation, infrastructure and community fabric are threatened as county officials favor greater urbanization to accommodate excess visitation.*

## **10 Reasons YOU should care about the commercialization of Coastal Agricultural lands in Sonoma County**

- 1. Increased traffic on Hwy 1, as well as other rural by-ways from significant truck traffic for wineries, increased greenhouse gas emissions and escalating tourism traffic.**
- 2. Significant water use by vineyards - winery and event center facilities.** Residents are being asked to conserve water, when commercial users are unregulated. Risk of residential wells going dry while neighboring wineries can drill deeper into the water table, with no consequences to their operations.
- 3. Town centered uses - such as food service and overnight accommodations - are being permitted at wineries.** Restaurants and hotels in towns may be losing business to all the "winemaker dinners" and food-pairing at wineries.
- 4. Public Safety -** With this surge of "Alcohol Tourism," the **health, welfare and safety** of our citizens is at risk. Roads are overburdened with visitors, many leaving wineries after events with long duration drinking. **Prime bicycle roads are over concentrated and now are becoming unsafe.** Bicycle touring groups have threatened to curtail tours if our road conditions worsen.
- 5. Increased public costs of emergency services – by 2014 the County had permitted almost DOUBLE the number of winery-related facilities on agricultural lands as projected for 2020 in the General Plan (GP projection 239 – Actual Use Permits 439).** Fire departments and sheriff now need to respond to emergencies on rural roads. Many facilities have been approved on sub-standard one-lane roads, impeding emergency access.

6. **Movement toward approving overnight accommodations - and VRBO - is taking away low income housing.** Farm workers have few places to live. Property owners building new homes got a building permit discount to make their second units/ granny units available for rental. Now, many of those units are being rented by the day – AirB&B or VRBO vs. long-term rentals.
7. **Wastewater disposal on winery and vineyard lands.** Winery wastewater has a very high biological oxygen demand and may be infused with toxic chemicals flowing into our watershed, which impacts the Russian River and threaten fish and other wildlife.
8. **Move toward approving Distillery’s on agricultural lands.** Distillate wastewater is extremely toxic – unmonitored disposal on vineyard lands threatens our groundwater drinking supplies.
9. **Increased Public Costs.** With increased tourism, work force and construction traffic, our roads and infrastructure are pushed beyond capacity – nearly 600 wineries are using our COMMON SHARED resources such as roads, water and emergency services.
10. **Your Neighborhood Next?** The cumulative impacts of the over-commercialization of Sonoma County on water, traffic, safety affect us all, whether we live in urban or rural areas. It is up to *all of us* to protect the quality of life in our county.

**Please join us and get involved!**

***Preserve Rural Sonoma County works to protect our rural character from the industrialization of agricultural lands by the encroachment of wine and spirits processing complexes/event centers. We educate, advocate and organize to take action to protect our families and communities, watersheds and wildlife habitat, addressing traffic safety, noise impacts, infrastructure and other impacts on the quality of life. JOIN US!***

***Like us on Facebook – Neighbors to Preserve Rural Sonoma County  
Visit our website at - <http://www.preserveruralsonomacounty.org>***