



Protecting and Restoring the Santa Barbara Channel and Its Watersheds

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August 13, 2007

Planning and Environmental Services Department
130 Cremona Drive, Suite B
Goleta, CA 93117

Attention: Alan Hanson

Re: Schwan Brothers Final Development Plan/Retaining Wall and Drainage Improvements; Case no. 03-116-FDP, 20 South Kellogg Avenue

Dear Mr. Hanson,

Santa Barbara Channelkeeper has reviewed the Schwan Brothers Final Development Plan and respectfully submits the following comments and recommendations.

According to the project description, approximately 40 yd³ of grading for trenching and 44 yd³ of re-contouring of approximately 130 linear feet of existing slope along the southern property line will be required to complete this project. However, based on the project plans and correspondence with City staff, it appears that earth-work or grading will be conducted along the eastern (creek-side) boundary of the property to restore the existing bank to a more stable slope of 2:1. This grading work will extend to a point approximately 10 feet from the top of the stream bank.

According to the City of Goleta General Plan, the portion of San Jose Creek adjacent to 20 S. Kellogg is designated as an Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area (ESHA). This designation provides for certain protections of the Creek and surrounding habitat.

General Plan Conservation Element 2.2 provides for a streamside protection area (SPA) to preserve creek channels and adjacent upland buffer areas in a natural state to protect riparian habitats and ecosystems. With few exceptions, this buffer area is to be no less than 50 feet outward on both sides of the creek, measured from the top of the bank. The grading activity described in this project plan will extend into the SPA of San Jose Creek. Although the plan does state that revegetation shall occur in the area immediately surrounding the discharge structure, there is no provision for revegetation of the entire re-graded SPA along the eastern creek bank.

According to General Plan Conservation Element 2.3, resource restoration or enhancement projects are allowed within SPAs. However, without revegetation, this grading activity will significantly impact biological resources within the SPA and therefore can not be considered to be in compliance with General Plan policy and can not be approved as described.

Channelkeeper strongly urges the Planning and Environmental Services Department to deny approval of this development plan, until revisions are made to address this policy conflict and provisions are included to ensure revegetation of the entire disturbed SPA.

Respectfully,

Ben Pitterle
Watershed Programs Director
Santa Barbara Channelkeeper