



SIERRA CLUB

LOMA PRIETA CHAPTER

February 14, 2022

Santa Clara County
Board of Supervisors
70 West Hedding Street
East Wing, 10th Floor
San Jose, CA 95110

Item 22: Referral Re Shared Enforcement of Lehigh Open Space Easement

Dear President Wasserman and Supervisors,

The Sierra Club has a long and storied history of supporting meaningful protection of the natural environment and in that vein, we wish to add our voice to those of the numerous environmental organizations that are in support of the Referral item as put forth by Supervisors Simitian and Lee on the February 15 Santa Clara County Supervisors' agenda. This is a visionary solution to a myriad of historically difficult environmental issues, and we urge the Board of Supervisors to see it in that light.

We do wish to note that the Sierra Club has a particular interest in the restoration of Permanente Creek on the same Lehigh property that Supervisors Simitian and Lee propose to purchase, which restoration is required to be performed by Lehigh consistent with our federal court Consent Decree in *Sierra Club v. Lehigh Southwest Cement Co.* This project, to be funded entirely by Lehigh, has been in the planning stages for almost 10 years, and is currently languishing in the CEQA process before the Santa Clara County Department of Planning and Development, albeit often due to absences of timeliness on the part of the applicant. This project would do nothing but enhance the natural values and sustainability of the property potentially subject to purchase. We therefore urge the Board of Supervisors, consistent with the property purchase initiative proposed by Supervisors Simitian and Lee, to elevate the restoration of Permanente Creek to be one of the County's highest priorities, and to take all measures necessary to expedite the CEQA and related permitting processes to ensure the restoration is commenced and completed within the milestones in the Consent Decree.

We close by expressing our appreciation to Supervisors Simitian and Lee for this forward-looking initiative and our wish to participate by providing continuing support for its eventual successful conclusion.

Sincerely,

James Eggers
Executive Director
Loma Prieta Chapter Sierra Club