

**PETITION TO ESTABLISH THE
"SAN LUIS OBISPO COAST" AND "SLO COAST"
AMERICAN VITICULTURAL AREA**



Respectfully Submitted by
Petitioner SLO Coast AVA Association

July 2017

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I. INTRODUCTION

The petitioner, SLO Coast AVA Association ("Petitioner"), is an association of 22 vintners and growers who are growing grapes and producing wine in an area commonly known, alternatively, as the "San Luis Obispo Coast" and the "SLO Coast." Wine grapes have been cultivated in the region as early as the 1770s.

The proposed San Luis Obispo Coast viticultural area encompasses an area of approximately 408,585 acres, of which approximately 3,942 acres are currently planted to vineyards. Within the proposed San Luis Obispo Coast viticultural area, approximately 2,661 acres are planted to vineyard in the Edna Valley AVA and 838 acres are planted to vineyard in the Arroyo Grande Valley AVA. The remaining 398 vineyard acres are distributed among dozens of vineyards throughout the proposed San Luis Obispo Coast viticultural area. There are approximately 78 different vineyards planted in the area, with a median size of 6.75 acres. *See* Appendix 1, a map showing the location of the referenced vineyards and Appendix 2, a spreadsheet showing the location, owner, average miles to the ocean and total acreage of each vineyard. There are over 50 bonded wineries located within the proposed viticultural area.

The proposed San Luis Obispo Coast viticultural area is located entirely within San Luis Obispo County, California and encompasses the portion of the county with the closest proximity to and that is most directly influenced by the Pacific Ocean. The close proximity to the Pacific Ocean and resulting marine influence of the San Luis Obispo Coast region create a distinctly long and cool growing season that significantly impacts the growth cycle, ripening pattern, quality and overall character of the varieties grown in the region. Petitioner has found that the grapes grown and wines produced in this coastal region vary greatly from those grown in nearby regions further inland, where the vineyards are protected from marine influence by the California Coastal Range and, specifically the Santa Lucia mountain range, which separates the proposed viticultural area from the Paso Robles AVA. The eastern boundary of the proposed SLO Coast viticultural area is, in most places, delineated by the Santa Lucia mountain range or the Los Padres National Forest – Santa Lucia Wilderness. The northern boundary of the proposed viticultural area begins south of the Monterey County line near the area of Ragged Point. The southernmost boundary of the proposed viticultural area is just north of the San Luis Obispo County and Santa Barbara County common boundary and the northern boundary of the Santa Maria Valley. The proposed San Luis Obispo Coast viticultural area is located entirely within the Central Coast AVA. The Edna Valley AVA and Arroyo Grande Valley AVA are located entirely within the proposed San Luis Obispo Coast

viticultural area. York Mountain AVA and Paso Robes AVA are east of the proposed viticultural area, and Santa Maria Valley AVA is south of the proposed viticultural area.

The San Luis Obispo Coast is a unique stretch of California coastline, although it shares a distinguishing feature with other California coastal AVAs – the marine influence. The maritime climate prevents extreme temperatures and limits diurnal temperature swings during the growing season. Although a diversity of grape varieties are grown in the proposed San Luis Obispo Coast viticultural area, the Burgundian varieties Pinot Noir and Chardonnay dominate, given their suitability to the maritime climate.

Locally and nationally, the name San Luis Obispo is often referred to by its initials – SLO. The abbreviation appropriately describes an element of the San Luis Obispo culture as well as, and relevant to this petition, the slow pace to physiological maturity of San Luis Obispo Coast wine grapes. The petitioner is aware of the convenient and frequently used abbreviation and has, therefore, petitioned here for the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau ("TTB") to recognize the proposed viticultural area by two names, "**San Luis Obispo Coast**" and "**SLO Coast**." The petitioners fear that by petitioning to form "San Luis Obispo Coast" alone, the inevitable use of "SLO Coast" will be unregulated and cause confusion. In this petition, we use the names "San Luis Obispo Coast" and "SLO Coast" interchangeably unless otherwise noted.

II. PROPOSED SAN LUIS OBISPO COAST AND SLO COAST VITICULTURAL AREA

To establish the proposed San Luis Obispo Coast and SLO Coast viticultural area and pursuant to 27 CFR §9.12, Petitioner offers the following:

- Evidence that the names "San Luis Obispo Coast" and "SLO Coast" are interchangeably, currently and directly associated with an area where viticulture exists;
- Historical and current evidence that the boundaries of the proposed viticultural area are as specified in the petition and clearly distinguishable;
- Evidence relating to the unique features (climate, geology, soil and physical features) which distinguish the viticultural features of the San Luis Obispo Coast from surrounding areas;
- A description of the specific boundaries of the viticultural area, based on features which can be found on United States Geological Survey (U.S.G.S.) maps of the largest applicable scale; and
- A copy (or copies) of the appropriate U.S.G.S. map(s) with the boundaries prominently marked.

Forest Cannon, P.h.D in Geography from the University of California, Santa Barbara and Climatologist for Storrer Environmental Services has assisted in the preparation of this petition. Kelly Bobbitt of Mike Bobbitt & Associates, GIS & GPS mapping specialists, prepared maps in support of this petition. Aaron Jackson, winemaker, and President and founding member of the SLO Coast AVA Association, has provided expertise in the area of cool climate viticulture. Jackson was born and raised in the coastal community of Cayucos in San Luis Obispo County and began working in coastal vineyards near his hometown in 1999, eventually founding his winery Aaron Wines in 2002. He holds a bachelor's degree in Wine & Viticulture from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, and a master's degree in Oenology from the University of Adelaide in South Australia.

III. NAME IDENTIFICATION AND BOUNDARY SUPPORT

The names "San Luis Obispo Coast" and "SLO" Coast" are commonly and widely used to describe the proposed viticultural area. The proposed viticultural area consists of the portion of San Luis Obispo County, California that is most directly influenced by the maritime climate.

A. Viticultural History

Grape growing and winemaking activities in the proposed San Luis Obispo Coast viticultural area date back to the late 18th century when Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa was founded. Vineyards were planted and wine produced by padres of Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa as early as the 1770s.

Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa was founded by Father Junípero Serra on September 1, 1772 in what is now the City of San Luis Obispo. The mission was named in honor of St. Louis, bishop of Toulouse and son of the King of Naples and Sicily.¹ Orchards and vineyards were planted at Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa almost immediately after its founding. The historian Myron Angel described the mission's early days as follows:

The mission soon became one of the most flourishing in California; extensive buildings were erected; schools established, and the Indians instructed in the mechanical arts. Orchards and vineyards were planted; the arable land cultivated, and the surrounding country stocked with cattle, sheep, horses, and mules.²

¹ ERWIN G. GUDDE, CALIFORNIA PLACE NAMES, THE ORIGIN AND ETYMOLOGY OF CURRENT GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES 340 (William Bright, 4th ed. 1998).

² MYRON ANGEL, HISTORY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY CALIFORNIA, WITH ILLUSTRATIONS AND BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF ITS PROMINENT MEN AND PIONEERS 33 (Howell-North Books, reprint ed. 1966).

Of the landscape of the Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa a few years later in 1775, Angel said:

The mission, as a whole, presented a fine picture when viewed from a distance from a commanding position. The red-tiled roofs of the buildings with their white walls; the silvery-green foliage of the olive mingling with the deeper shades of that of the fig and other trees; the water ditches winding through vineyards and gardens; the mountain stream with its banks bordered with giant sycamores and drooping willows, curving gracefully in its course through the heart of the mission, the water appearing at intervals through the green foliage, reflecting the rays of the sun with sparkling brilliancy, contrasting most picturesquely with each other, and with the bold features of the mountain scenery, and the perfect azure of the sky.³

Early visitors of the mission were "hospitably entertained" by the padres, free of charge. "Upon leaving, they were tendered fresh horses; also a flask of wine and a prepared luncheon – *para el camino* – for the road."⁴

The mission's name was used first for the town that grew up around the mission, then for the county.⁵ Due to the length of the proper name of the mission, "de Tolosa" was eventually eliminated by custom.⁶ The County of San Luis Obispo, one of the original twenty-seven in the State of California, was established on February 18, 1850.⁷

A century after the founding of the mission, vineyard plantings and wine production were steadily increasing in the area. The San Luis Obispo County Assessor's returns indicate that 800 gallons of wine were produced in 1870.⁸ In 1873, the Assessor reported that 60,000 grapevines were planted, followed by 80,000 in 1876. Of the grape and orchard activity in San Luis Obispo in 1877, the historian Myron Angel said:

In the orchard are almonds, nectarines, apricots, and luxuriant growth. Grapes, strawberries, and other similar fruit are grown in abundance. The locality is quite elevated, being about 800 feet above the sea, but is so sheltered by the hills that frost does not destroy fruit.⁹

³ Id.

⁴ Id.

⁵ MARK P. HALL-PATTON, *PLACENAMES OF SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY MEMORIES OF THE LAND* 118 (EZ Nature Books 1994).

⁶ Angel, p. 33.

⁷ Gudde, p. 340.

⁸ Angel, p. 175.

⁹ Id. at 184.

In 1882, the Assessor's returns showed that 52 acres of vineyard had been planted and 2,120 gallons of wine were produced.¹⁰ By 1883, 81 acres had been planted to vineyard in San Luis Obispo County.

The modern wine industry in the proposed San Luis Obispo Coast viticultural area emerged in the 1970s. In 1974, Bill Greenough of Saucelito Canyon Vineyard and Winery discovered that vines planted by Rancho Saucelito homesteader Henry Ditmas in the upper Arroyo Grande Valley in 1880 (once used to make wine at Rancho Saucelito and St. Remy Winery) were still producing grapes nearly a century later.¹¹

A few years later, successful early plantings of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir quickly propelled the notoriety of the San Luis Obispo Coast area as a world-class region for Burgundian varieties. In 1973, Jack and Catherine Niven planted the 500 acre Paragon Vineyard in the Edna Valley. That same year, Norm Goss planted the 60 acre Chamisal Vineyard. Further planting and the development of the area's first wineries began in the early 1980s with Edna Valley Vineyard, Claiborne & Churchill Winery, Maison Deutz, Saucelito Canyon Vineyard and Winery and Talley Vineyards. Over the past 30 years, vineyards have expanded outside of the Edna and Arroyo Grande Valleys into the larger coastal area of San Luis Obispo County from Nipomo in the south to San Simeon in the north. The wines of the region have grown in both production and recognition throughout California and the entire United States.¹²

Approximately 3,942 acres of the proposed San Luis Obispo Coast viticultural area are planted to vineyards, approximately 2,661 acres of which are located in the Edna Valley AVA and 838 acres of which are located in the Arroyo Grande Valley AVA. There are approximately 78 different vineyards which have a median size of 6.75 acres. *See Appendix 1.* The vineyards in the proposed SLO Coast viticultural area are located 5.87 miles from the coast on average. The vineyard situated closest to the Pacific Ocean is located only 0.25 miles away, while the furthest is located 15 miles away.

Nearly two dozen varieties are grown in the proposed viticultural area, but as shown on the chart below, varieties suited to the cool climate such as Chardonnay and Pinot Noir dominate, similar to other cool climate viticultural regions in California.¹³

¹⁰ Id. at 181.

¹¹ <http://www.slowine.com/about/heritage.php>

¹² Id.

¹³ This chart was compiled by Petitioner using 2015 United States Department of Agriculture Census data.

Appellation:	CHARDONNAY	PINOT NOIR	SYRAH	CABERNET	SAUV BLANC	CH + PN	CH + PN + SYR	% OF TOTAL
SLO COAST	43.08%	34.57%	8.21%	0.67%	2.53%	77.65%	85.86%	89.06%
RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY	41.00%	29.00%	2.00%	4.00%	4.00%	70.00%	72.00%	80.00%
SANTA LUCIA HIGHLANDS	33.49%	50.30%	3.00%	0.00%	0.70%	83.79%	86.79%	87.49%
ANDERSON VALLEY	22.05%	68.50%	0.20%	0.00%	0.20%	90.55%	90.75%	90.95%
ARROYO GRANDE VALLEY	15.99%	50.79%	10.93%	3.03%	0.44%	66.78%	77.71%	81.18%
EDNA VALLEY	54.82%	27.00%	6.70%	0.00%	3.11%	81.82%	88.52%	91.63%
STA RITA HILLS	18.20%	76.60%	4.00%	0.00%	0.00%	94.80%	98.80%	98.80%
PASO ROBLES	5.00%	2.00%	9.00%	39.00%	2.00%	7.00%	16.00%	57.00%
SLO COUNTY*	9.15%	6.10%	7.00%	37.84%	1.70%	15.25%	22.25%	61.79%
SANTA BARBARA COUNTY*	34.16%	32.83%	8.18%	4.40%	4.80%	66.99%	75.17%	84.37%
SONOMA COUNTY*	26.52%	20.61%	3.00%	20.29%	4.49%	47.13%	50.13%	74.91%
NAPA COUNTY*	15.56%	6.30%	1.98%	44.65%	6.30%	21.86%	23.84%	74.79%
MENDOCINO COUNTY*	27.92%	15.58%	3.92%	16.54%	3.94%	43.50%	47.42%	67.90%
MONTEREY COUNTY*	37.60%	20.20%	3.53%	10.42%	2.16%	57.80%	61.33%	73.91%

* 2015 USDA CENSUS DATA

There are over 50 bonded wineries presently located within the proposed viticultural area.

A study from 2015, which was a particularly difficult year for growers and wineries due to the ongoing California drought which resulted in dramatically lower yields for vineyards, showed that the wine industry in San Luis Obispo County¹⁴ generated an estimated \$1.9 billion in regional economic activity, \$194 million of revenue for the regional tourism industry, \$924 million of total value added to the California gross state product and 13,627 jobs for the California economy.¹⁵ The study found that the Paso Robles wine region accounted for approximately 87% of San Luis Obispo County's wine industry output. This leaves the remaining 13% attributed to the wine industry that is largely based within the boundaries of the proposed SLO Coast viticultural area, contributing approximately \$247 million in regional economic activity, \$25 million in tourism revenue, \$120 million of total value added and 1,772 jobs.

B. Name Evidence

The names "San Luis Obispo Coast" and "SLO Coast" are understood and used locally and nationally to describe the specific winegrowing region that is the subject of this petition. In general, the names apply to the coastal portion of San Luis Obispo County west of the Santa Lucia mountain range, between Monterey and Santa Barbara Counties.

As described above, the name "San Luis Obispo" has applied to the region since the founding of Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa in 1772. The addition of "Coast" to the name "San Luis

¹⁴ The study referred to was commissioned by the Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance and conducted by the University of California Agricultural Issues Center at UC Davis. The data reflects the economic impact of the wine industry in the entire County of San Luis Obispo, including the Paso Robles AVA.

¹⁵ <http://pasoroblesdailynews.com/local-wine-industry-adds-1-43-billion-in-economic-benefit-study-says/54895/>

Obispo" in the context of the grape growing and winemaking activities in the area was only natural, as the vineyards and wineries in this area of San Luis Obispo County are located on the seaward side of the Santa Lucia Range portion of the Southern Coastal Range, cradled between the mountains to the east and the Pacific Ocean to the west. The coast and the mountain range create natural boundaries for a viticultural area characterized by cool climate viticulture.

The San Luis Obispo region is often referred to by its initials, "SLO," which refers to the relaxed culture of the San Luis Obispo area and also appropriately applies to the rate of physiological maturity of grapes grown in the proposed viticultural area. The abbreviation is used so commonly and frequently that the petitioners fear that if TTB recognizes the proposed viticultural area by "San Luis Obispo Coast" only, the inevitable and unregulated use of "SLO Coast" will cause confusion. Therefore, the petitioner requests that TTB recognize the proposed viticultural area by both "San Luis Obispo Coast" and "SLO Coast."

1. Prior "Coastal" Rulemaking

TTB and its predecessor, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives ("ATF"), have established five "coastal" AVAs, including the North Coast AVA, Central Coast AVA, South Coast AVA, Sonoma Coast AVA and Malibu Coast AVA. Like the proposed San Luis Obispo Coast viticultural area, these coastal AVAs are all bounded on their western side by the Pacific Ocean and are characterized primarily by the influence of the maritime climate on viticulture.

In its final rule for the establishment of the Central Coast AVA, ATF said the following regarding "coastal" AVAs:

ATF believes that a viticultural area with the word "coast" should be an area which is under the marine influence. This idea is based on a principle in *General Viticulture* by A.J. Winkler, *et. al.* (page 68), that grapes grown in a coastal region are different from grapes grown in an interior valley even if both areas have the same heat summation. Therefore, the eastern boundary of the Central Coast viticultural area is drawn at the approximate inland limit of the marine influence on climate.¹⁶

Like the Central Coast AVA, which is bounded on the east by the California Coastal Ranges, the proposed eastern boundary of the proposed SLO Coast viticultural area is drawn along the seaward side of the Santa Lucia mountain range, a range included in the network of mountains referred to as the California Coastal Ranges. The Santa Lucia Range creates a

¹⁶ Establishment of the Central Coast Viticultural Area, 50 Fed. Reg. 43,128 (October 24, 1985).

natural barrier of marine influence to areas east of the proposed boundary as the mountains rise several thousand feet in elevation from sea level in only a few miles. As such, the climate in areas east of the Santa Lucia Range show significant climatic differences to those on the western side of the range.

Similarly, in its final rulemaking for the establishment of the Sonoma Coast AVA, ATF found that the name "Sonoma Coast" appropriately applied to the "coastal region" of Sonoma County and that the approved area included "only the portion of the county which is under very strong marine influence."¹⁷

The Sonoma Coast AVA is fully contained within the North Coast AVA, which was established by ATF in 1983. The Sonoma Coast AVA was established a few years later in 1987. Like the establishment of the Sonoma Coast AVA within the North Coast AVA, the establishment of the proposed San Luis Obispo Coast viticultural area within the existing Central Coast AVA represents a more specifically defined coastal grape growing region. While both the Central Coast AVA and the North Coast AVA experience the maritime climate, the Sonoma Coast AVA and the proposed SLO Coast viticultural area represent those portions of their respective counties that are most directly influenced by the Pacific Ocean.

With respect to the Malibu Coast AVA, TTB said in its Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that the proposed area included the city of Malibu, California and said that the petitioners chose the name due to "...the region's location along the Pacific Ocean and the influence the ocean has on climate."¹⁸

The proposed SLO Coast viticultural area is analogous to the other "coastal" AVAs previously established by TTB because the proposed area consists of the portion of San Luis Obispo County that is most directly influenced by the maritime climate.

2. References to "San Luis Obispo Coast" and "SLO Coast" in the Community

The names "San Luis Obispo Coast" and "SLO Coast" are used in various travel and tourism publications associated with the area. For example, *An Explorer's Guide, Santa Barbara & California's Central Coast* by Donna Wares contains a chapter entitled "Coastal SLO" that refers to the "SLO Coast" nearly a dozen times.¹⁹ See Exhibit A, an excerpt from *An Explorer's Guide, Santa Barbara & California's Central Coast*. The "Highway 1 Discovery Route" tourism website sponsored by the San Luis Obispo Unincorporated County Business Improvement District is

¹⁷ Establishment of the Sonoma Coast Viticultural Area, 52 Fed. Reg. 22,302 (June 11, 1987).

¹⁸ Proposed Establishment of the Malibu Coast Viticultural Area, 78 Fed. Reg. 40,644 (July 8, 2013).

¹⁹ DONNA WARES, *AN EXPLORER'S GUIDE SANTA BARBARA & CALIFORNIA'S CENTRAL COAST* 132-161 (The Countryman Press 2011).

dedicated exclusively to promoting tourism in "Coastal San Luis Obispo County."²⁰ The website describes ten destinations along the San Luis Obispo County coastline, all which of which are located within the proposed viticultural area. These destinations include: Ragged Point, San Simeon, Cambria, Cayucos, Los Osos/Baywood Park, Avila Beach, Oceano, Nipomo, Arroyo Grande Valley and Edna Valley.



© 2016 Highway1DiscoveryRoute.com²¹

The name "San Luis Obispo Coast" has also been used by the California Department of Parks and Recreation. On its website, the Department of Parks and Recreation describes the "San Luis Obispo Coast" as follows:

Halfway between San Francisco and Los Angeles along the central California coastline is a meeting of land and sea that is an integral part of the California State Parks system. Beaches, waterfalls, natural and cultural preserves are all part of the Central Coast State Parks. In this breathtaking region, redwoods march down to the sea, wildlife thrives along the rugged coastline and sand dunes protect endangered plants and animals as part of this natural treasure. Dream-like Hearst Castle floats ethereally above the clouds and historic buildings in San Simeon take us back to California's Spanish heritage.²²

The SLO Wine Country Association, a local vintners association, has been promoting wines from the proposed San Luis Obispo Coast viticultural area since 1990. Its website, *slowine.com*, features a tasting map that shows the location of various wineries located in the proposed SLO Coast viticultural area. See Exhibit B, the SLO Wine Country Association Tasting Map.

²⁰ <http://highway1discoveryroute.com/cambria-visitor-guide/>

²¹ Used with the permission of the San Luis Obispo Unincorporated County Tourism Business Improvement District.

²² http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=23793

The "Climate" page of *slowine.com* reads as follows:

The climate of SLO Wine Country is distinguished by a continual influence from the Pacific Ocean. Many of the vineyards lie within five miles from the shoreline, and the rare east-to-west orientation of the valleys brings a reliable cooling effect to the entire region.²³

With respect to the boundaries of the "SLO Wine Country," on the "Region" page of *slowine.com*, the San Luis Obispo Wine Country Association says:

From north to south, the SLO Coast extends from the seaside town of San Simeon to Nipomo. From east to west, it extends from the peaks of the Santa Lucia mountains to the Pacific Ocean. The geographic orientation of SLO Wine Country ensures a continuous influence of marine air from the Pacific Ocean. SLO Wine Country includes two small adjoining American Viticultural Areas – the Edna Valley and Arroyo Grande Valley – and other nearby winegrowing areas. Each of these areas shares a unifying proximity to the ocean, as well as to each other.²⁴

Various businesses in the region include "San Luis Obispo Coast" or "SLO Coast" in their business name, and/or use the names to describe the geographic reach of their business. Examples of business names include *SLO Coast Coffee*, *SLO Coast Realty*, *SLO Coast Jerky*, *SLO Coast Construction*, and *SLO Coast Insurance Services*. See Exhibit C, a map showing the location of the referenced businesses and Exhibit D, examples of business websites and marketing materials.

The names "San Luis Obispo Coast" and "SLO Coast" are also used by political figures and non-profit associations. For example, California State Senator Bill Monning's website refers to "SLO," "SLO County," and "SLO Coast." He describes the "SLO Coast" as including the towns of Pismo Beach, Grover Beach, and Arroyo Grande, all of which are located within the proposed viticultural area. See Exhibit E, a screen shot of Mr. Monning's website. The San Luis Obispo Chapter of the Surfrider Foundation also refers to the "SLO Coast" and "SLO" repeatedly on its website.²⁵ See Exhibit F, a screenshot of the SLO County Surfrider Foundation's website.

²³ <http://www.slowine.com/about/climate.php>

²⁴ <http://www.slowine.com/about/region.php>

²⁵ <https://slo.surfrider.org>

3. Narrative of San Luis Obispo Coast Viticultural Area and its Boundaries

The proposed SLO Coast viticultural area consists of the coastal portion of San Luis Obispo County, between Monterey and Santa Barbara Counties. The proposed boundaries were first considered by identifying those vineyards in the coastal areas of San Luis Obispo County that typify the cool climate viticulture of the area known as the "SLO Coast" or "San Luis Obispo Coast" grape growing region. *See* Appendix 1.

As discussed above, two federally recognized AVAs have already been formed in the San Luis Obispo Coast – the smaller Edna Valley AVA and Arroyo Grande Valley AVA. The Edna Valley AVA was established by a Final Rule published on June 11, 1982 (the "EV Final Rule").²⁶ The EV Final Rule describes the Edna Valley AVA as a northwest-southeast oriented valley that is heavily influenced by the maritime climate reaching the Edna Valley through the funnel of the Los Osos Valley. In the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for the Edna Valley petition, the petitioner described the climate as predominately Region II.²⁷ The Arroyo Grande Valley AVA was established by Treasury Decision ATF-291 on January 4, 1990 (the "AGV Final Rule").²⁸ In the AGV Final Rule, the Arroyo Grande Valley is described as having a Region I to Region II climate influenced by its proximity to the Pacific Ocean and oriented on a northeast-southwest axis, which causes prevailing southwesterly winds in the valley. The Arroyo Grande Valley is described in the Final Rule as generally being cooler than the Edna Valley AVA, and both AVAs are described as cooler than the more continental Paso Robles AVA on the eastern side of the Santa Lucia Range.²⁹ The Santa Lucia Range is highlighted as climatically and geographically critical to both the Edna Valley and Arroyo Grande Valley viticultural areas. Since 1990, the two AVAs, although geographically, geologically and climatically distinct, have been marketed together in an effort to educate consumers about cool climate viticulture and wines from this coastal region of San Luis Obispo County. *See* Exhibit G, a letter of support from the SLO Wine Country Association.

As commercial viticulture in the Edna Valley AVA and Arroyo Grande AVA has expanded, so too has commercial viticulture in the larger San Luis Obispo coastal zone. After identifying these vineyards, the Petitioner set about examining the geographic boundaries that defined the area of most concentrated marine influence in San Luis Obispo County appropriate for

²⁶ Establishment of the Edna Valley Viticultural Area, 47 Fed. Reg. 20,298 (May 12, 1982).

²⁷ Proposed Establishment of the Edna Valley Viticultural Area, 46 Fed. Reg. 21,195 (April 9, 1981).

²⁸ Establishment of the Arroyo Grande Valley Viticultural Area, 55 Fed. Reg. 285 (January 4, 1990).

²⁹ Interestingly, the weather data accumulated for the purposes of preparing this Petition indicate that the Arroyo Grande Valley AVA is actually, on an overall basis, slightly warmer than the Edna Valley AVA. It is likely that the petitioners of the Arroyo Grande Valley AVA were evaluating vineyard weather stations and the climate at the developed vineyards rather than weather data available now through PRISM data. In his evaluation of this question, climatologist Forest Cannon stated that the complex topography of the eastern Arroyo Grande Valley AVA may make weather data less reliable in this area.

viticultural development. The boundaries were further refined, in compliance with the requirements of 27 CFR 9.12(a)(4), using map features found on U.S.G.S. 7.5 minutes series maps. Generally, the western boundary of the proposed San Luis Obispo viticultural area is the Pacific Ocean and the eastern boundary is marked by the Southern California Coastal Range, most specifically the Santa Lucia Range.³⁰

Over 97% of the proposed viticultural area is below 1800 feet above sea level, which represents the approximate limit of strong marine influence and the majority of the western facing area of the Santa Lucia Range that serves as the proposed viticultural area's eastern boundary. *See* Appendix 3, a map showing the portions of the proposed viticultural area at or above 1800 feet above sea level. The Petitioner used a peak-to-peak mapping strategy for much of the eastern boundary, jumping from peak-to-peak in a manner that identifies the area of the San Luis Obispo County that is oriented towards the Pacific Ocean on the western side of the Santa Lucia Range and not including those areas cut off from the immediate influence of the Pacific. The Petitioners made amendments to the peak-to-peak strategy to be consistent with TTB guidance providing that a recognized viticultural area should include only land that is available for viticulture. The following is a narrative of the proposed SLO Coast viticultural area boundaries, taking into account TTB's mapping requirements. The proposed regulatory description of the boundaries follows at Section VI, below.

The proposed SLO Coast viticultural area begins in the area of Ragged Point at the southern boundary of the Los Padres National Forest – Monterey Ranger District (*See* Exhibit H, a map of the Los Padres National Forest – Monterey Ranger District produced by the United States Forest Service), just south of the Monterey County Line. At the northern end of the proposed San Luis Obispo Coast viticultural area, as the Santa Lucia Range approaches the coastline, the proposed AVA is relatively narrow. This northern area of San Luis Obispo County is the gateway to the dramatic geographic landscape of Big Sur where tall mountains jut sharply upwards from the floor of the Pacific Ocean. As the proposed viticultural area trends southerly, the Santa Lucia Range gradually separates from the coast, allowing for coastal terraces, foothills and small valleys to exist between the western slopes of the Santa Lucia Range and the Pacific Ocean. In the north, the proposed AVA is as narrow as 1.7 miles across and, in the south, the proposed AVA achieves a width of 15.1 miles at its widest point as the Santa Lucia Range sits further back from the coast.

After mapping the boundaries peak-to-peak along the western facing ridge of the Santa Lucia Range in a generally southeasterly direction through the Burro Mountain, Piedras Blancas,

³⁰ The eastern boundary of the proposed viticultural area is delineated by the portion of the Southern California Coastal Range that is located in San Luis Obispo County. In most places in San Luis Obispo County, this range is known as the Santa Lucia Range. The "Santa Lucia Range" or the "Santa Lucia Wilderness" is identified on the Burro Mountain, Cypress Mountain, and Lopez Mountain Quadrangles.

San Simeon, Pebblestone Shut-In, Lime Mountain, and Cypress Mountain quadrangles, the Petitioner deviates from the peak-to-peak mapping convention to follow the westerly boundary of the small York Mountain AVA thereby avoiding any gap of plantable acreage between the existing York Mountain AVA and the proposed AVA. South of the York Mountain AVA, much of the Santa Lucia Range is included in the Los Padres National Forest – Santa Lucia Ranger District produced by the United States Forest Service. See Exhibit I, a Motor Vehicle Use map for Santa Lucia Ranger District. At this point, the eastern boundary of the proposed AVA follows the most western boundary of the Los Padres National Forest in a stair step fashion to an area just north of the city of San Luis Obispo, in the vicinity of Camp San Luis Obispo.

The eastern boundary of the proposed viticultural area then skirts the perimeter of Camp San Luis Obispo, a California National Guard territory that, like the Los Padres National Forest, is not available for viticulture. From the military boundary, the AVA boundary then returns to the western facing ridge of the Santa Lucia Range and continues southward, just west of the Los Padres National Forest boundary, excluding higher elevations where the marine influence decreases and vineyard development would be challenging due to the land being largely inaccessible.

The eastern boundary then follows the outer confines of the Lopez Lake Recreation Area – also an area unavailable for viticultural development. This portion of the southeastern boundary of the proposed viticultural area otherwise tracks the eastern boundary of the Arroyo Grande Valley AVA, which was established prior to TTB guidance instructing that a recognized viticultural area should include only land that is available for viticulture. In its rulemaking related to the formation of the Arroyo Grande Valley AVA, ATF found that Arroyo Grande Valley AVA was a cool climate, marine-influenced viticultural area.

After following the eastern boundary of the Arroyo Grande Valley AVA, the boundary line tracks southeasterly just west of Newsom Ridge and Huasna Peak, east of the town of Nipomo, but excludes the Huasna Valley, which lacks the direct marine influence that funnels into the Edna Valley and Arroyo Grande Valley as evidenced by the climate data discussed in Section IV(A)(2) below and ATF's prior rulemaking on Edna Valley AVA and Arroyo Grande Valley AVA.

The boundary then drops south below Huasna peak to a point just north of the Santa Barbara County line at the common boundary between the Nipomo Mesa and the Santa Maria Valley. The boundary of the proposed viticultural area then continues in a generally westerly direction along the southern boundary of the Nipomo Mesa to the coast. The southwestern border excludes the Santa Maria Valley, which is a large valley with a singular sandy soil-type that has been planted exclusively to row crops. Additionally, it excludes a large swath of

coastal dunes in the Oceano State Vehicular Recreation Area, as it is not available or appropriate for vineyard development. The western boundary is otherwise the coastline of the Pacific Ocean.

C. Names of Viticultural Significance

The petitioner proposes that both "San Luis Obispo Coast" and "SLO Coast" be recognized as the names of viticultural significance. The names are used both locally and nationally to refer to the proposed viticultural area. Petitioners fear that if TTB recognizes the proposed viticultural area by "San Luis Obispo Coast" alone, the inevitable and unregulated use of "SLO Coast" will cause confusion.

IV. DISTINGUISHING FEATURES

A. Geographic and Viticultural Distinctiveness

1. Geographic Setting, Topography and Geomorphology

The proposed viticultural area consists of the portion of San Luis Obispo County, California that is most directly influenced by the maritime climate. Its western boundary is the Pacific Ocean and its eastern boundary is the Santa Lucia Range, which is a coastal mountain range located within site of the Pacific Ocean and is a part of the Southern California Coastal Range. As with the previously-approved American Viticultural Areas that include the word "coast" in their names, the California Coastal Ranges, or their sub-ranges, are critical to the geographic distinctiveness of the areas and to their role in defining the maritime climate. The proposed viticultural area stretches from the Los Padres National Forest just south of the Monterey County line on its northern boundary to just north of the Santa Barbara County line on its southern boundary.

Over 97% of the proposed SLO Coast viticultural area is at or below 1800 feet above sea level, which corresponds to the approximate limit of the influence of the maritime climate and its associated marine layer, as well as the limit of the western orientation of the mountain range that serves as the proposed viticultural area's eastern boundary.

Like other previously established "coast" AVAs, the proposed SLO Coast viticultural area is characterized by the moderating impact of the maritime climate, which prevents extreme temperatures and limits diurnal temperature swings during the growing season. The topography of the Santa Lucia Range maintains this steady maritime influence in the proposed viticultural area.

The topography of the proposed SLO Coast viticultural area consists of foothills, valleys, coastal terraces and areas along the western slopes of the Santa Lucia Range. The Petitioner has excluded the southernmost portion of San Luis Obispo County from the proposed San Luis Obispo Coast viticultural area, which consists of a portion of the Santa Maria Valley. The Santa Maria Valley is characterized by much flatter topography and lower elevation. While there is significant viticulture in the Santa Maria Valley AVA, located southeast of the San Luis Obispo County line, the area immediately adjacent to the southern boundary of the proposed viticultural area has been intensely planted with row crops. This portion of the Santa Maria Valley was also excluded from the Santa Maria Valley AVA although it shares the geographic name. The lack of vineyard development in this otherwise prime agricultural area highlights its distinctiveness from the proposed SLO Coast AVA.

2. Climate

a. Generally

The "coastal" climate has been discussed in numerous prior rulings by TTB and ATF. In the final rule for the establishment of the Central Coast AVA, ATF summarized the "coastal" climate as follows:

The Central Coast viticultural area is bounded on the west by the Pacific Ocean and on the east by the California Coastal Ranges. The Coastal Ranges form a barrier to the marine influence on climate, causing precipitation, heat summation, maximum high temperatures, minimum low temperatures, length of the frost-free season, wind, marine fog incursion, and relative humidity to be significantly different on opposite sides of these mountains. The area inland of the Coastal Ranges is typically arid or semi-arid. This difference in climate causes harvested grapes to be significantly different from grapes grown further inland.³¹

Although the Paso Robles AVA is a part of the larger Central Coast AVA, the "coastal" climate described in the final rule for the establishment of the Central Coast AVA is in contrast to the summary of climate in the Paso Robles AVA in the Final Rule establishing Paso Robles AVA. Regarding the Paso Robles climate, ATF said:

The area is protected from marine air intrusion and coastal fogs by the Santa Lucia Mountains on the west and south. This is a marked contrast to the area to

³¹ Establishment of the Central Coast Viticultural Area, 50 Fed. Reg. 43,128 (October 24, 1985).

the west and south [the proposed SLO Coast AVA] where such coastal fogs are common with cooler temperatures in the summer months.³²

Further, the Paso Robles AVA "has a diurnal (beginning and end of the day) temperature change of 40 to 50 degrees..." while the area to the west and south has a diurnal fluctuation of between 20 and 30 degrees caused by the flow of cool, moist marine air accompanied by fog intrusions."³³

b. Growing Season and Growing Degree Days

i. Methodology

The Petitioner obtained weather station data from the National Oceanographic and Atmosphere Administration's National Climatic Data Center ("NCDC") and the University of California's Cooperative Extension San Luis Obispo County ("UCCE"). NCDC data is averaged on a monthly basis and the length of the record varies for each station, though only stations with more than 15 years of data were used. 28 UCCE stations were used, each of which represent hourly temperature data from 2008 through 2011.

Although the length of the temporal record of the UCCE stations is relatively short and Petitioner has little information about how slope, aspect, orientation, land-cover, vegetation and nearby structures may affect the record, it is reasonable to assume that the UCCE maintains quality control over the stations and that the analyses and results based on the networks data are robust. Nine NCDC stations were also used, which include National Weather Service stations with longer temporal records and documented quality control for the area. These stations collectively include data from 1979 through 2015. One Remote Automated Weather Station was used, which includes temperature data from 2008 through 2015. See Appendix 4, a map showing the location of and average growing degree day ("GDD") range recorded by each weather station during the growing season and Appendix 5, a table showing the station identification numbers, management agencies, date ranges, average minimum temperatures, average maximum temperatures, and average GDD during the growing season. The station numbers on Appendix 4 correspond to the table on Appendix 5. Given that the two station networks were generally in agreement, the Petitioner is confident in its findings.

Parameter Regression on Independent Slopes Method ("PRISM") data was used to examine spatial gradients in temperature across the proposed viticultural area. PRISM monthly

³² Establishment of the Paso Robles Viticultural Area, 48 Fed. Reg. 45,239 (October 4, 1983).

³³ Id.

climatologies from 1981 to present were used to complete climate information where the NCDC and UCCE stations do not provide coverage. PRISM is a statistical methodology of interpolating station-based climatic data using a dynamic knowledge-based framework of prevailing meteorology in the area of interest. The regression scheme accounts for complex climate regime associated with orography, rain shadows, temperature inversions, slope aspect, coastal proximity and other factors. The Petitioner notes that the climatologies used for interpolation reflect monthly averaged conditions, and thus do not account for day-to-day variations in the weather that would produce spatial gradients of meteorological variables that do not match the monthly average. Despite this issue, the PRISM data used in the preparation of this petition agrees well with the station data described above. Furthermore, during the period studied here (the winegrape growing season which runs from April to October), there is relatively little atmospheric variability due to persistent high pressure over the eastern Pacific Ocean. Thus, the Petitioner is confident that the long-term averages of temperature in the proposed viticultural area are accurate.

The average GDD per growing season (April – October) were calculated by applying the heat summation methodology of Amerine and Winkler to PRISM and station temperature data. Amerine and Winkler's heat summation formula is based on the concept that most vine-shoot growth occurs in temperatures over 50 degrees Fahrenheit. GDDs for a particular region are calculated by adding the total mean daily temperatures above 50° F for the days from April 1 through October 31. Thus, a day with an average temperature of 68° F is given a heat summation value of 18 "degree days."

Generally, there was agreement between the PRISM and station data GDD calculations. Stations immediately adjacent to the coast exhibit GDD within the 1500-2000 range, while those stations located further inland increase in value according to the distance from the coast and topographic features that inhibit the marine influence.

It is important to note that while the coastline itself is not viable for viticulture, it is included in the proposed SLO Coast viticultural area because it is the conduit for the marine influence that distinguishes the proposed viticultural area from area that surrounds it. However, as a result, the GDD average for the entire viticultural area may be slightly lower than the areas east of the coastline where the vineyards in the proposed San Luis Obispo Coast viticultural area are located.

ii. Growing Degree Days

Like the other "coastal" AVAs previously established by TTB, the vast majority of the proposed SLO Coast viticultural area is classified as Region I and Region II on the Amerine and Winkler GDD scale. Over 50% of the proposed viticultural area is within Region II (2500-3000 GDD

per season), and over 93% of the proposed viticultural area is within Regions I and II (less than 3000 GDD per season). Only 6.3% falls into the low Region III category (3000-3500 GDD). See Appendix 6, a map showing the average GDD during the growing season using station and PRISM data.

The following chart shows the average GDD for the proposed SLO Coast viticultural area, as well as several other established appellations.³⁴ The weighted average GDD of the proposed San Luis Obispo Coast viticultural area is 2493 using Fahrenheit measurement.

Appellation	GDD (°C)	GDD (°F)	Region
Willamette Valley	1210	2178	I
Burgundy, France	1319	2374	I
SLO Coast	1382	2493	I
Santa Lucia Highlands	1440	2592	II
Monterey	1441	2594	II
Sonoma Coast	1442	2596	II
Arroyo Seco	1489	2680	II
Santa Rita Hills	1496	2693	II
Sonoma Co Green Valley	1496	2693	II
Mendocino Ridge	1501	2702	II
Edna Valley	1513	2738	II
Santa Maria Valley	1518	2733	II
Russian River Valley	1520	2736	II
Anderson Valley	1533	2760	II
Bordeaux, France	1537	2767	II
York Mountain	1540	2772	II
Arroyo Grande Valley	1542	2786	II
Santa Cruz Mountains	1553	2795	II
Santa Ynez Valley	1580	2844	II
Chalk Hill	1634	2941	II
Los Carneros	1637	2947	II
Northern Sonoma	1668	3002	III
Sonoma Valley	1676	3017	III
Chalone	1701	3062	III
Sonoma Mountain	1803	3245	III
Oak Knoll District	1807	3253	III
Oakville	1807	3253	III
Rutherford	1895	3411	III
Paso Robles	1903	3425	III

iii. Minimum Temperature

In the proposed SLO Coast viticultural area, the average minimum temperature for nearly 90% of the viticultural area is between 47.5 degrees and 52 degrees. See Appendix 7, a map

³⁴ This data was compiled from research done by Gregory V. Jones, a professor and research climatologist in the Environmental Science and Policy Program at Southern Oregon University. Dr. Jones's data includes GDD data from 1971-2000. Because Dr. Jones' data was expressed in degrees Celsius, Petitioner converted the data to degrees Fahrenheit by using a factor of 0.5555.

showing the mean monthly average minimum temperature during the growing season using PRISM data.

Seasonal changes in temperature, as well as diurnal temperature shifts, are much less extreme on the coast compared to inland regions, including nearby regions just east of the Santa Lucia mountain range. This is largely due to the proximity of the Pacific Ocean, the cool waters of which have a high heat capacity that provides a constant moderation on the climate of the proposed AVA. Overnight low temperatures are impacted by a number of factors including reduced daytime high temperatures compared to inland valleys, nighttime fog development, and lower seasonal temperature variation. The presence of fog in nighttime and early morning hours during most of the year reduces diurnal swings to no more than 20-30 degrees within 24 hours, compared to 40-50 degrees in inland valleys. The characteristically mild winter temperatures cause a lack of substantial frosts, which lead to shorter periods of wintertime vine dormancy, and earlier bud break in the springtime as soils warm more quickly. Potentially damaging frost events that can kill early season vine growth in spring, while possible, are far less common in the coastal area compared to inland valleys.

iv. Maximum Temperature

The "coastal" AVAs are also characterized by low maximum temperatures during the growing season. Low maximum temperatures near the coast are attributable to the development of a sea breeze circulation, driven by inland heating. 21% of the proposed viticultural area has a mean maximum temperature of less than 70 degrees, while another 68% of the proposed viticultural area is within the 70-78 degree maximum temperature range. *See Appendix 8, a map showing a map showing the mean monthly average maximum temperature during the growing season using PRISM data.*

The impact of these of these lower daytime temperatures, coupled with an earlier bud break, lead to the growing season of coastal AVAs being significantly longer than warmer inland regions, often by many weeks. Additionally, lower daytime temperatures lead to a decrease in seasonal GDD, which limit which varieties that can be successfully grown for high quality wine production. According to the Winkler Scale, Regions I (1,500-2,500 GDD) and II (2,500-3,000 GDD) are particularly well suited for the production of high quality wines from early to mid-season ripening varieties. Varieties sensitive to high temperatures and solar radiation may develop inadequately or become damaged by high temperatures, resulting in a loss of the characteristics considered critical to producing wines of high quality. Lower maximum temperatures lead to a reduced risk of fruit desiccation and greater retention of delicate aromatic compounds, both of which are considered critical to certain varieties such as Pinot Noir. Additionally, lower maximum temperatures result in higher levels of malic acid in fruit, which increase total acidities and lower pH values, which are considered a positive to wine

quality. Conversely, varieties that are better suited to warmer climates may not reach full maturity when grown in cooler, maritime climates, producing grapes with limited sugar, color, and flavor development and ultimately inferior quality wines.

Chardonnay and Pinot Noir are the most widely planted grape varieties in the proposed AVA (43% and 35% of total planted acreage, respectively) because of their ability to thrive and produce quality wines in the maritime climate. Historically grown in the coolest climates of France, northern Europe, and the western United States, Pinot Noir and Chardonnay are early-ripening varieties that are adapted to mature despite cool temperatures and lower amounts of sunlight. Pinot Noir and Chardonnay grown in the proposed viticultural area showcase optimum flavor development, higher natural acidities and lower alcohol levels in the finished wines. The long, cool growing season, combined with the lack of heat stress and freeze events in this climate, makes it possible to produce very high quality wines from these two varieties. Syrah makes up 8% of total planted acreage, and unlike Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, it thrives in both warm and cool growing regions. However, Syrah in the cooler, coastal regions differs greatly in its flavor profile, phenolic level, acidity and alcohols. Typically, Syrah grown in this climate showcases more pepper and gamey flavors compared to the riper, fruitier flavors typical of warmer climates, as well as higher acidity and lower alcohol levels.

v. Climate Variations

Due to the size of the proposed SLO Coast viticultural area, some variations in climate do exist. Areas within the proposed viticultural area that possess the highest GDD values are located where the topography inhibits the advection of cool marine air, including the higher elevation portions of the Santa Lucia Range within the proposed viticultural area, as well as the far eastern portion of the Arroyo Grande Valley AVA.

The far eastern portion of the Arroyo Grande Valley AVA is a narrowing canyon set within the larger coastal mountain range that is more sheltered from the marine influence that persists in the majority of the Arroyo Grande Valley. This area experiences more elevated maximum temperatures during the day and lower minimum temperatures at night relative to other portions of the proposed viticultural area. Further, this area is classified as low Region III on the Amerine and Winkler heat summation scale, while the majority of the remaining area is classified as Region I and Region II. This area of the Arroyo Grande Valley represents approximately 5% of acreage of the proposed AVA.

TTB has previously acknowledged that smaller viticultural areas tend to be more uniform in their distinguishing characteristics than larger viticultural areas. In its final rule for the establishment of the North Coast AVA, ATF stated:

It is ATF's experience that smaller viticultural areas tend to be more uniform in their geographical and climatic characteristics, while very large areas such as the North Coast tend to exhibit generally similar characteristics, in this case the influence of maritime air off of the Pacific Ocean and San Pablo Bay.³⁵

Specifically, TTB has previously established "coastal" AVAs that fully contain smaller viticultural areas with slightly warmer microclimates relative to the remaining area. In its final rule for the establishment of the Malibu Coast viticultural area, TTB found that both the Saddle Rock-Malibu AVA and the Malibu-Newton Canyon AVA should be included in the larger Malibu Coast viticultural area despite the slightly warmer temperatures in those AVAs. About these two nested AVAs, TTB said:

The two smaller AVAs are located in valleys set within the larger mountain range that comprises the Malibu Coast AVA and are somewhat sheltered from the marine fog by the high valley rims. As a result, temperatures within the two smaller AVAs are somewhat warmer than those found in the less-sheltered areas of the Malibu Coast AVA.³⁶

Much like the Saddle Rock-Malibu AVA and the Malibu-Newton Canyon AVA, the eastern portion of the Arroyo Grande Valley AVA is slightly warmer than the rest of the proposed SLO Coast viticultural area. However, this area is climatically consistent with the proposed viticultural area because, while slightly sheltered, it is similarly affected by the maritime climate. In its final rule for the establishment of the Arroyo Grande Valley AVA, ATF said:

The Arroyo Grande area [is] west of the Santa Lucia Mountain range and experiences the moderating coastal influences. Early morning fogs (many times up until 9 to 10 a.m.) and afternoon coastal onshore breezes during the growing season keep this area much cooler and the maximum temperatures of shorter duration than the grape growing area east of the Mountain range.³⁷

Thus, while the eastern portion of the Arroyo Grande Valley AVA is slightly warmer than the rest of the proposed viticultural area, the Arroyo Grande Valley AVA should be included in the San Luis Obispo Coast viticultural area because it similarly experiences the effect of the maritime climate.

³⁵ Establishment of the North Coast Viticultural Area, 48 Fed. Reg. 42,973 (September 21, 1983).

³⁶ Establishment of the Malibu Coast Viticultural Area, 79 Fed. Reg. 41,894 (July 18, 2014).

³⁷ Establishment of the Arroyo Grande Valley Viticultural Area, 55 Fed. Reg. 285 (January 4, 1990).

c. Cloud Cover

i. Methodology

Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer ("MODIS") land surface temperature at 1-kilometer resolution was analyzed at twice-daily intervals for the period 2003-2015. This data is acquired from the Aqua Satellite MYD11A1, which makes one daytime pass and one nighttime pass over Southern California each day. The data product's "cloud mask" feature was used to assess the cloud cover over the proposed viticultural area with the goal of identifying spatial temperature and cloud cover gradients for comparative analysis of temperature and cloud cover over the proposed viticultural area and the adjacent areas. During the daytime, temperature data derived from radiance retrievals are prone to biases based on surface exposure, land cover type and atmospheric conditions, which affect radiative transfer and thus the efficacy of MODIS's algorithm. This typically results in overestimation of temperature during the daytime. However, at night, MODIS derived land surface temperatures are consistent with station measurements above the surface. In preparing this petition, the Petitioner relied strictly on the analysis of horizontal gradients under the assumption that any errors are consistent in space, thus allowing the direct comparison of pixels. Additionally, spatial gradients of temperature data generally agree between MODIS and PRISM.

ii. Cloud Cover in the Proposed San Luis Obispo Coast Viticultural Area

The vast majority of the proposed viticultural area experiences nighttime fog cover between 35% and 55% of all nights during the growing season (April – October). *See* Appendix 9, a map showing the percentage of cloud covered nights during the growing season. The area immediately adjacent to the coast, as well as the Morro Bay area and the southernmost area of the proposed SLO Coast experience fog 55-75% of all nights during the growing season.

High pressure dominates the climate of the northern Pacific Ocean and western United States during the summer, inducing stable atmospheric conditions and northwesterly winds along the continent's west coast. The prevailing winds generate the California Current and coastal upwelling, which cool surface waters along the coast. Warm, moist air from the Pacific Ocean that flows over the narrow margin of relatively cold coastal waters may cool sufficiently to condense, thus forming the large regions of low-level fog over the ocean that are typically observed off of California's coast during the summer months.

During the summer, the land surface heats up dramatically during daylight hours, especially in California's inland valleys, while the coastal waters, which have a higher heat capacity, remain cool. The heating of air over the land surface causes the air to become buoyant and rise (or

"convect"). This rising motion over land creates a region of low-pressure near the surface that draws cool, moist air over the ocean inland, developing a sea-breeze circulation.

Onshore wind transports moist air, including the fog that is consistently found over the ocean, over land. The extent of the sea-breeze influence depends on local topography, with coastal plains allowing for further inland penetration than near-coast mountain ranges. However, fog that is blown inland during the day typically dissipates quickly due to strong heating of the air. In the evening, temperature over land decreases rapidly and moist air above it, which was drawn inland by the sea breeze, cools to its dew point, resulting in fog formation. Because the sea breeze circulation shuts down in the evening due to a lack of solar heating, the low-level atmosphere again becomes stable and the fog that has formed inland remains overnight. When the land begins to heat the following morning, the atmosphere warms and destabilizes, resulting in fog dissipation and a renewed sea-breeze circulation. This diurnal process is frequently observed during the summer months along California's Central Coast.

The presence of fog in the proposed viticultural area during the nighttime and early morning hours during the growing season has a moderating effect on nighttime and daytime temperatures. As discussed above, the temperature change throughout the day in the proposed viticultural area is generally no more than 20-30 degrees, as compared to 40-50 degrees swing experienced by the areas east of the proposed viticultural area. Mild winter temperatures result in fewer episodes of frost, which contributes to shorter periods of vine dormancy during the winter and early bud break in the spring.

d. Climate Outside of the Proposed AVA

As discussed by TTB in the final rule for the establishment of the Paso Robles AVA, the area to the east of the proposed SLO Coast viticultural area is protected from marine air intrusion and coastal fogs by the Santa Lucia Range and is thus much warmer during the growing season.

The attached Appendix 6 also shows the drastic difference in heat summation between the proposed SLO Coast viticultural area and the area to the east of the proposed boundaries. Much of this area, including the Paso Robles AVA, is classified as Region III on the Amerine and Winkler GDD scale, while the vast majority of the proposed SLO Coast AVA is classified as Region I and Region II and, using the weighted average, the proposed San Luis Obispo Coast viticultural area falls within the Region I classification.

Although the data included in this Petition and in the rulemaking record for the Paso Robles AVA identify a distinguishing gap between growing degree days that characterized the areas, in *General Viticulture*, Professor Winkler also said that grapes grown in a coastal region are different from grapes grown in an interior valley even if both areas have the same heat

summation.³⁸ That is, fruit grown in an area directly impacted by the coastal climate is distinguishable from fruit grown in an interior valley.

3. Geology, Soils and Terroir

a. Geology

The principal geology of the proposed SLO Coast viticultural area is a complex system, although in general it is composed of a *mélange* of both young and old material from differing time periods. This is largely influenced by a number of faults located within the boundaries of the proposed viticultural area, resulting in a tectonically active area for millions of years. The result of such activity is a series of hills, valleys, and coastal terraces that have formed between the coastal ridge of the Santa Lucia Range and the Pacific Ocean.

In the northern and central part of the proposed viticultural area, the geology is primarily made up of older rocks derived from tectonic activity along the Nacimiento and Oceanic faults, which date to the Cretaceous and Jurassic periods (201-66 million years ago). Much of this geology is known as the Franciscan Assemblage, which includes metamorphosed sedimentary rocks, as well as igneous and highly mineralized material uplifted by tectonic subduction. The southern portion of the proposed viticultural area is predominately much younger material from the Tertiary period (25 million years ago-present). This geology mostly consists of marine deposits and basin sediments that have developed between the more westerly Huasna fault and the shoreline of the Pacific Ocean.

b. Soils

Soils within the proposed San Luis Obispo Coast viticultural area mimic the parent geology in that they are highly complex, but they can be classified into four groups. The vast majority of the soils found within the boundaries of the proposed SLO Coast viticultural area boundaries are soils derived from older Franciscan Formation geology. The southernmost portion of the proposed viticultural area contains soils from younger marine and basin deposits of Tertiary period geology. Finally, soils from either volcanic intrusion or wind deposits represent small portions of soils within the proposed viticultural area. These soils are found along the coast in the area of Morro Bay and in the most southwestern area of the proposed viticultural area. *See* Appendix 10, a map showing the soils found within the boundaries of the proposed viticultural area.

Soils derived from Franciscan Formation geology represent the largest proportion of soils within the boundaries of the proposed SLO Coast viticultural area, making up the majority of the Santa Lucia mountain range, as well as the subsequent valleys and coastal terraces that

³⁸ A.J. WINKLER ET AL., *GENERAL VITICULTURE* 68 (University of California Press, revised and enlarged ed. 1974).

form along its western slopes towards the shoreline. These soils represent a large portion of the central and northern portions of the proposed SLO Coast viticultural area, from just south of the city of San Luis Obispo northward towards the Monterey County line, and eastward to the proposed boundary of the San Luis Obispo Coast viticultural area. These soils vary from very thin, rocky soils on hills and mountains, to very deep clay and clay loam soils along lower-lying alluvial fans and terraces. The majority of soils in this area is derived from sandstone, shale, and metamorphosed sedimentary rocks. Due to the similar parent geology of most of these soils, most contain higher amounts of minerals and clay than soils in the southern portion of the proposed SLO Coast viticultural area, which are generally more sandy and/or loamy. Additionally, they are more varied than soils in the southern portion due to the highly complex nature of the Franciscan Formation geology that produced these soils. As such, the number of identified soil series in this area is quite large, although many of the different soil series share similar characteristics. Soils in this group vary in viticultural suitability from excellent to poor. Shallow soils on hills and mountains can be steep and difficult to cultivate, and thus would be considered less viable for viticulture, although gentler slopes on hills may have sufficient soil depth to be considered good to excellent for grapevine cultivation. Soils of this group on foothills, terraces, and valleys are often excellent for viticulture. These soils are generally clay, clay loam, or sandy clay loam of varying depths with good drainage, moderate water holding capacity, and high mineral content. Many of these soils are suited to dry farming or farming with low irrigation input. Prime viticultural soils in this group are the Diablo, Los Osos, San Simeon, Shimmon, Conception, and Santa Lucia series.

Soils from younger marine deposits and basin sediments from the Miocene and Pliocene periods represent the second largest proportion of soils in the proposed SLO Coast viticultural area, making up a majority of the southern portion of the proposed viticultural area. This area includes valleys, coastal terraces, and mountains around the townships of Los Osos, Avila Beach, Pismo Beach, and Arroyo Grande. These soils vary from thin, rocky soils on hills and mountains to very deep soils in lower lying areas. The majority of soils in this group are composed of sandy loam and loams derived from marine deposits of sandstone and shale. Most of the soils in this group are suitable for high quality viticulture, although thin soils on mountains can be excessively steep and potentially unsuitable. Soils in this group have more sand and less clay in their composition than those found in the northern portion of the proposed viticultural area, providing excellent drainage, but often necessitating irrigation during the growing season. Prime viticultural soils in this group are Pismo, Briones, Tierra, Gazos, Nacimiento, Linne, Balcom, Santa Lucia, and Sorrento series.

Soils derived from volcanic intrusion represent a very small proportion of the soils within the proposed viticultural area, occurring mostly in isolated instances on very steep terrain within the Santa Lucia mountain range, as well as along the rocky outcrops of The Morros, a group of

mountains derived from extinct volcanoes. However, small portions of volcanic intrusion soils exist on a limited basis in the areas of Arroyo Grande and Nipomo. Most soils in this group are thin soils on excessively steep terrain or rocky outcrops that are unsuitable for viticulture; although some lower lying areas could potentially be cultivated.

Soils from wind deposits largely consist of sand dunes and/or low-lying areas near the coast. These soils make up a very small portion of the proposed viticultural area, mainly around the township of Nipomo and along the coastline near Morro Bay. These soils were deposited in the most recent geological period and consist of very deep sands at low elevations. These soils are generally unsuitable for viticulture due to excessive drainage, high sodium content and their unstable nature. Additionally, these soils generally exist within a proximity to the Pacific Ocean that would be considered climatically unsuitable for viticulture.

B. Comparison to Existing AVAs

1. Existing Edna Valley and Arroyo Grande Valley AVAs

The existing Edna Valley and Arroyo Grande Valley AVAs are both fully contained within the proposed boundaries of the proposed SLO Coast viticultural area. Although geographically, geologically and climatically distinct from one another, the Edna Valley and Arroyo Grande Valley AVAs are consistent with the parameters for the proposed San Luis Obispo Coast viticultural area described in this petition due to the influence of the maritime climate. Similar to the Malibu-Newton Canyon and Saddle Rock-Malibu AVAs nested within the Malibu Coast AVA, the Edna Valley and Arroyo Grande Valley AVAs are slightly warmer microclimates within the proposed SLO Coast viticultural area.

2. Central Coast AVA

The proposed SLO Coast viticultural area is fully contained within the established Central Coast AVA. As discussed above, similar to the establishment of the Sonoma Coast AVA within the North Coast AVA, the proposed San Luis Obispo Coast viticultural area represents a more specifically defined coastal grape growing region within the Central Coast AVA that exhibits more exaggerated effects of the marine influence. *See Appendix 11, a distinguishing features table comparing the proposed SLO Coast viticultural area to the Central Coast AVA.*

3. Santa Maria AVA

The Santa Maria Valley AVA is located southeast of the proposed SLO Coast viticultural area. While close in proximity and climatically similar to the proposed viticultural area due to the marine influence, the Santa Maria Valley AVA is distinguishable from the proposed San Luis Obispo Coast viticultural area based on name, topography and soils. Both regions are ideal for

cool climate viticulture, yet have considerable differences in coastal proximity, soil composition, and climate.

The proposed SLO Coast viticultural area is characterized by a series of foothills, valleys, and coastal terraces formed between the western ridge of the Santa Lucia mountain range and the Pacific Ocean. In contrast, the Santa Maria Valley AVA consists of flat to rolling terrain along the terraces the Santa Maria River, framed on the east by the Sierra Madre Mountains. Vineyards within the proposed SLO Coast viticultural area feature an average proximity to the ocean of less than 6 miles, keeping them well within the moderating effect of the Pacific Ocean. The Santa Maria Valley AVA is a northwest/southeast valley that is roughly 12 miles from the Pacific Ocean at its westernmost point, and over 30 miles from the ocean at its eastern boundary. The orientation of the Santa Maria Valley and its relatively flat topography allows for cool northwest winds to blow directly down the valley, which keeps temperatures cool far inland. The climate of the proposed San Luis Obispo Coast viticultural area is moderated by these same northwest winds, but a closer proximity to the ocean and a more varied topography make for a slightly more complex climatic environment. Existing vineyards within the proposed SLO Coast viticultural area vary in elevation from as low as 150 feet in coastal valleys to over 1,300 feet as terrain rises on the western slope of the Santa Lucia Range. Vineyards in the Santa Maria Valley are relatively low in elevation, concentrated along the valley floor and nearby benchlands ranging from 350-550 feet above sea level.

Soils in the Santa Maria AVA are largely from young geological times and consist of deep, fertile, sandy soils that are well suited to a wide variety of crops including winegrapes, strawberries, vegetables and tree fruits. The majority of these soils were derived from alluvial deposits from the Santa Maria River and its tributaries. Contrastingly, soils in the proposed SLO Coast viticultural area are primarily of older geology, consisting mainly of clay and clay loam soils with considerable mineral complexity, as well as loamy marine basin deposits. These soils are generally shallower, rocky, less fertile, and more complex in nature. Their suitability to winegrapes is good, but much less so for other crops besides tree fruits and certain varieties of vegetables.

Also See Appendix 12, a distinguishing features table comparing the proposed SLO Coast viticultural area to the surrounding areas to the north, east and south of the proposed boundaries.

V. SUPPORT FOR THE PETITION

There is broad support in the SLO Coast community for the establishment of the San Luis Obispo Coast viticultural area, including from the local vintners' association, the County of San Luis Obispo, and the Wine and Viticulture department of the local university, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

Attached as Exhibit G is a letter of support from the SLO Wine Country Association, an association of local vintners that is responsible for marketing the coastal wine growing region of San Luis Obispo County. The association was originally founded in 1990 as the "Edna Valley/Arroyo Grande Valley Vintners Association," but as wine growing in the area expanded outside of the Edna Valley and Arroyo Grande AVAs, the organization expanded its territory to include the entire portion of San Luis Obispo County that is west of the Santa Lucia mountain range. In 2011, the association changed its name to "SLO Wine Country Association."

Exhibit J is a letter of support from the San Luis Obispo County Tourism Business Improvement District, an entity established by the County of San Luis Obispo to promote tourism in the unincorporated areas of San Luis Obispo County.

Attached as Exhibit K is a letter of support from Benoit Lecat, the Department Head of the Wine and Viticulture Department at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo ("Cal Poly"). The Wine and Viticulture Department at Cal Poly is teaching Wine and Viticulture with a small experimental vineyard called the Trestle Vineyard from which the students produce wine. The Cal Poly Trestle Vineyard is located within the proposed SLO Coast viticultural area and is indicated on Appendix 1.

Exhibit L is a letter of support from Katcho Achadjian, a former Member of the California Assembly whose district (District 35) includes the area of the proposed San Luis Obispo Coast viticultural area. Mr. Achadjian has lived in the city of San Luis Obispo since 1971.

Attached as Exhibit M is a letter of support from Visit San Luis Obispo County, the entity charged with tourism marketing in greater San Luis Obispo County.

Finally, Exhibit N is a letter of support from San Luis Obispo County Supervisor for District 3, Adam. Hill. Mr. Hill's district is located within the proposed SLO Coast viticultural area.

VI. MAPS AND BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The appropriate maps for determining the boundaries of the proposed San Luis Obispo Coast viticultural area are 24 U.S.G.S. 1:24,000 scale (7.5 minute) topographic maps. They are titled:

1. Burro Mountain 1995
2. Piedras Blancas 1959, photo inspected 1976
3. San Simeon 1958, photo inspected 1976
4. Pebblestone Shut-In 1959, photo inspected 1976
5. Lime Mountain 1948, photo revised 1979
6. Cypress Mountain 1979
7. York Mountain 1948, photo revised 1979
8. Morro Bay North 1995

9. Atascadero 1995
10. San Luis Obispo 1968, photo revised 1979
11. Morro Bay South 1965, photo revised 1978
12. Lopez Mountain 1995
13. Arroyo Grande N.E. 1985
14. Tar Spring Ridge 1995
15. Nipomo 1965
16. Huasna Peak 1995
17. Twitchell Dam 1959, photo revised 1982
18. Santa Maria 1959, photo revised 1982
19. Oceano 1965, revised 1994
20. Pismo Beach 1998
21. Port San Luis 1965, photo revised 1979
22. Cayucus 1965, revised 1994
23. Cambria 1959, photo revised 1979
24. Pico Creek 1959, photo revised 1979

The proposed San Luis Obispo Coast viticultural area is located in San Luis Obispo County, California. The area's proposed boundaries are as follows:

1. Starting on the Burro Mountain Quadrangle, at the intersection of the northern Piedras Blanca Grant Boundary and the Pacific Ocean coastline in Section 16; then
2. Following the northern Piedras Blanca Grant boundary before departing in a straight line to the east to an unnamed peak 1462 feet in elevation in Section 11; then
3. Southeasterly onto Piedras Blancas Quadrangle to an unnamed peak 2810 feet in elevation in Section 19; then
4. Southeasterly onto the San Simeon Quadrangle to Garrity Peak with an elevation of 2397 feet; then
5. East to an unnamed peak with an elevation of 2729 feet in Section 32; then
6. Southeasterly crossing onto the Pebblestone Shut-In Quadrangle to Rocky Butte with an elevation of 3432 feet in Section 24 ; then
7. Continuing southeasterly to Vulture Rock with an elevation of 2849 feet in Section 29; then
8. Southeasterly over the southwest corner of the Lime Mountain Quadrangle and onto the Cypress Mountain Quadrangle to Cypress Mountain with an elevation of 2933 feet in Section 12; then
9. Continuing southeasterly onto the York Mountain Quadrangle to the intersection between the Dover Canyon Jeep Trail and Dover Canyon Road in Section 14; then

10. Continuing southerly down the Dover Canyon Jeep Trail and continuing onto Dover Canyon Creek in the southern quarter of Section 25 where the Dover Canyon Jeep Trail intersects with Dover Canyon Creek ; then
11. Continuing in a southeasterly direction along Dover Canyon Creek until its intersection with Santa Rita Creek; then
12. Following Santa Rita Creek in an easterly direction to the point at which Santa Rita Creek splits creating the South Fork at the point where Cayucos Templeton Road turns in a southerly direction; then
13. Following Cayucos Templeton Road south onto the Morro Bay North Quadrangle to the point of its intersection with the northeast section line of Section 20; then
14. Following the northeast section line of Section 20 in a southeasterly direction to the northern most corner of the Los Padres National Forest; then
15. Following the western boundary of the Los Padres National Forest to the south and across the Atascadero Quadrangle and onto the San Luis Obispo Quadrangle to the intersection of the Los Padres National Forest Boundary and the Military Boundary of the Camp San Luis Obispo National Guard Reservation at the eastern boundary of Section 32 ; then
16. Following the Military Boundary of Camp San Luis Obispo National Guard Reservation south and southwest to Highway 1; then
17. West on Military Boundary where it runs parallel to Highway 1; then
18. Continuing along the Military Boundary around Cuesta College onto the Morro Bay South Quadrangle and then back onto the San Luis Obispo Quadrangle, south and then east until the Military Boundary again crosses Highway 1 in Section 17; then
19. Continuing along the Military Boundary in a generally northeasterly direction until the Military Boundary intersects the unnamed peak with an elevation of 1321 feet; then
20. Southeasterly in a straight line to the intersection of the Los Padres National Forest Boundary and the southwest corner of Section 17 on the Lopez Mountain Quadrangle; then
21. Southeasterly in a straight line to the southwest corner of Section 28; then
22. Southeasterly in a straight line to the unnamed peak with an elevation of 2094 feet in Section 2; then
23. Southeasterly in a straight line onto the Arroyo Grande N.E. Quadrangle to the intersection of the 1,800 feet contour line and the eastern boundary of Section 12; then
24. Southerly on the Los Padres National Forest boundary to its southwestern-most corner; then
25. Southeasterly to an unnamed peak with an elevation of 1884 feet in Section 19; then
26. Southeasterly in a straight line to the northwestern-most corner of the Lopez Lake Recreation Area in Section 19; then
27. Southerly in a straight line to the southwestern-most corner of the Lopez Lake Recreation Area in Section 30; then

28. Following the southern boundary of the Lopez Lake Recreation Area onto the Tar Spring Ridge Quadrangle to the point at which the boundary of the Lopez Lake Recreation Area intersects the road commonly known as Hi Mountain Road; then
29. Following Hi Mountain Road to the intersection of Hi Mountain Road with a road commonly known as Sausalito Creek Road (this intersection being 1.2 miles northeast of Ranchita Ranch) in the Arroyo Grande Land Grant; then
30. From the intersection of Hi Mountain Road and Sausalito Creek Road in a straight line north, northeasterly to an unnamed peak with an elevation of 1182 feet in Section 19; then
31. Southeasterly in a straight line to an unnamed peak with an elevation of 1022 feet in Section 29; then
32. Westerly in a straight line to an unnamed peak with an elevation of 1310 feet in Section 30; then
33. Southeasterly in a straight line to an unnamed peak with an elevation of 1261 feet in Section 32; then
34. Southeasterly in a straight line to an unnamed peak with an elevation of 1436 feet in Section 4; then
35. Southwesterly in a straight line to an unnamed peak with an elevation of 1308 feet in the Huasna Land Grant; then
36. Westerly to an unnamed peak with an elevation of 1070 feet in Section 1; then
37. Southerly to an unnamed peak with an elevation of 1251 feet in the Huasna Land Grant; then
38. Southwesterly to an unnamed peak with an elevation of 1458 feet in the Santa Manuela Land Grant; then
39. Southeasterly to an unnamed peak with an elevation of 1377 feet in the Huasna Land Grant; then
40. Southwesterly to an unnamed peak with an elevation of 1593 feet in the Santa Manuela Grant and on the Nipomo Quadrangle; then
41. Southwesterly to the Jeep Trail immediately north of the summit of an unnamed peak with an elevation of 1549 in Section 35; then
42. North, northwesterly along the Jeep Trail on Newsom Ridge to the point of intersection of the Jeep Trail and an Unnamed Road immediately North of Section 28; then
43. Southerly along the unimproved road to its intersection with Upper Los Berros Road No. 2 in Section 33; then
44. Southeasterly along Upper Los Berros Road No. 2 through Section 33, 34, 28, 34, 35, 36, 31, 6, 7 and 8 and onto the Huasna Peak Quadrangle to the point of intersection of the road with Hwy 166; then
45. Westerly on Highway 166 onto the Twitchell Dam Quadrangle, then onto the Santa Maria Quadrangle, then onto the Nipomo Quadrangle and back onto the Santa Maria Quadrangle to its intersection with Highway 101; then

46. South on Highway 101 to the northerly bank of the Santa Maria River; then
47. Westerly along the northerly bank of the Santa Maria River to its intersection with the 200 foot contour line; then
48. In a generally westerly direction on the 200 foot contour line, which contour line follows the berm that is the southern boundary of the Nipomo Mesa and the northern boundary of the Santa Maria Valley, onto the Nipomo Quadrangle and then onto the Oceano Quadrangle; then
49. Where the 200 foot contour line turns north away from the southern boundary of the Nipomo Mesa and ceases to run parallel to the 100 foot contour line, south less than 1/10th of a mile to the 100 foot contour line; then
50. In a generally westerly direction on the 100 foot contour line to its intersection with Highway 1; then
51. In a straight line in a northwesterly direction to Lettuce Lake and the eastern boundary of the Indefinite Boundary of the Pismo Dunes State Vehicular Recreational Area; then
52. Northerly along the Indefinite Boundary of the Pismo Dunes National Preserve to corner just west of Black Lake; then
53. East in a straight line to a four wheel drive road east of Black Lake; then
54. Northerly along the four wheel drive road to the eastern boundary of the Sand Dunes and following the Sand Dunes in a Northerly direction to the intersection with the road commonly known as Delta Lane (south of the Oceano Airport); then
55. Following Delta Lane northerly to the intersection with Ocean Street and then easterly in a straight line to Highway 1; then
56. Northerly on Hwy 1 onto the Pismo Beach Quadrangle until its intersection with the street commonly known as Harloe Avenue, following Harloe Avenue west to its intersection with the boundary of Pismo State Beach and following the Pismo State Beach boundary northwest to its termination at the Pacific Ocean; then
57. Northerly along the Pacific Ocean coastline across the Pismo Beach, Port San Luis, Morro Bay South, Morro Bay North, Cayucos, Cambria, Pico Creek, San Simeon, and Piedras Blancas Quadrangles and onto the Burro Mountain Quadrangle to the point of beginning.

VII. SUMMARY

The proposed San Luis Obispo Coast or SLO Coast viticultural area is a well-known and established viticultural area that exemplifies the characteristics of a uniform coastal or cool climate viticultural area. Formation of the proposed viticultural area will formalize the recognition of an area already known to wine consumers as a coastal viticultural area and final recognition of the area, with both name alternatives - San Luis Obispo Coast and SLO Coast - will allow for the accurate description of wines made in the region and prevent consumer confusion.

Further, establishment of the San Luis Obispo Coast viticultural area will be entirely consistent with TTB's prior rulemaking on "coast" AVAs. The San Luis Obispo Coast viticultural area is the most coastal region of the Central Coast AVA within San Luis Obispo County. The formation of a larger AVA- SLO Coast- around existing smaller AVAs- Edna Valley AVA and Arroyo Grande AVA- is also consistent with prior rulemaking in that smaller micro-climates within a larger coastal region predictably have higher heat summations than the larger coastal area, which includes the area directly adjacent to the Pacific Ocean.

For these reasons, and as further described in this petition and supported by the exhibits and attachments hereto, the Petitioner respectfully requests that TTB form the "San Luis Obispo Coast" viticultural area and recognize "SLO Coast" as its alternative term of viticultural significance.

EXHIBIT AND APPENDIX LIST

EXHIBIT A: Excerpt from *An Explorer's Guide, Santa Barbara & California's Central Coast*

EXHIBIT B: SLO Wine Country Association Tasting Map

EXHIBIT C: "SLO Coast" Businesses Map

EXHIBIT D: "SLO Coast" Business Websites and Marketing Materials

EXHIBIT E: Screenshot of Senator Bill Monning's website

EXHIBIT F: Screenshot of SLO County Surfrider Foundation's website

EXHIBIT G: Letter of Support from SLO Wine Country Association

EXHIBIT H: Los Padres National Forest – Monterey Ranger District

EXHIBIT I: Los Padres National Forest – Santa Lucia Ranger District

EXHIBIT J: Letter of Support from the San Luis Obispo County Tourism Business Improvement District

EXHIBIT K: Letter of Support from Benoit Lecat, Department Head, Wine and Viticulture, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo

EXHIBIT L: Letter of Support from former California Assemblyman for District 35, Katcho Achadjian

EXHIBIT M: Letter of Support from Visit San Luis Obispo

EXHIBIT N: Letter of Support from San Luis Obispo County Supervisor for District 3, Adam Hill

APPENDIX 1: Vineyard Map

APPENDIX 2: Vineyards by Owner, Average Miles to the Ocean and Total Acreage

APPENDIX 3: Elevation Map

APPENDIX 4: GDD Map Station Data

APPENDIX 5: GDD Table

APPENDIX 6: GDD Map PRISM and Station Data

APPENDIX 7: Minimum Temperature PRISM Data

APPENDIX 8: Maximum Temperature PRISM Data

APPENDIX 9: Percent of Nighttime Retrievals with Cloud Cover

APPENDIX 10: Soils Map

APPENDIX 11: Distinguishing Features Table Comparing the Proposed SLO Coast AVA to Central Coast AVA

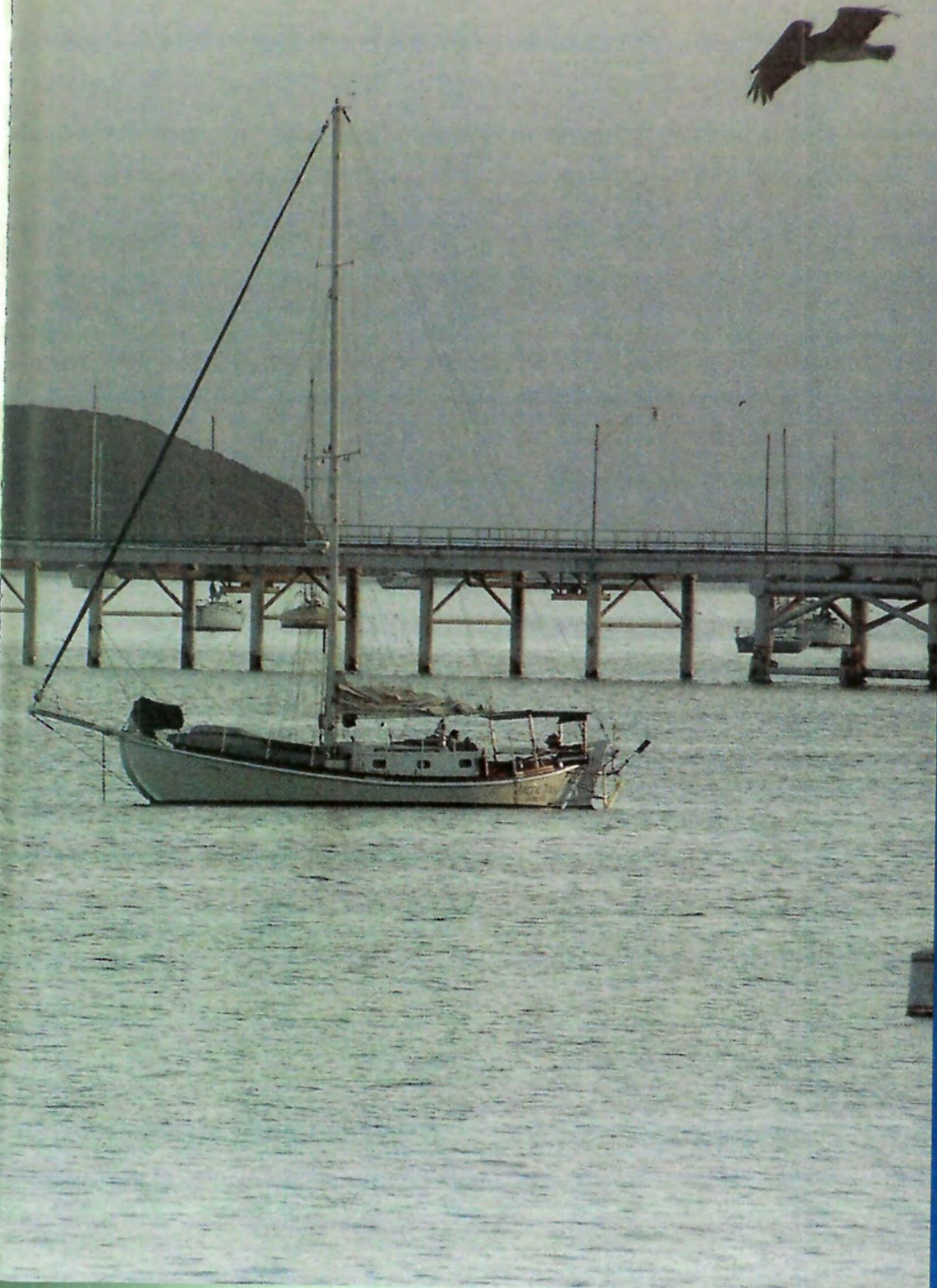
APPENDIX 12: Distinguishing Features Table Comparing the Proposed SLO Coast AVA to Surrounding Areas

APPENDIX 13: Map of Proposed SLO Coast Viticultural Area with Mapping Instructions

APPENDIX 14: USGS Maps

Coastal SLO

6



COASTAL SLO

"San Simeon was the place God would have built—if he had the money."

—George Bernard Shaw on the Hearst Castle

The California Dream is on opulent display 362 days a year at Hearst Castle, Central California's signature landmark. The hilltop mansion has been a state park since 1958 and offers the rest of us a rare glimpse inside the glittering world and staggering wealth of newspaper mogul and art collector William Randolph Hearst. You'll find Hearst's "Enchanted Hill" perched high atop Highway 1 along the San Luis Obispo County coastline, a zigzagging stretch of small towns, surf beaches, and an impressive collection of state parks splayed out one after another along the Pacific's rugged edge.

Sixty miles south of Hearst's well-preserved crown jewel of the California park system you'll find a vastly different kind of state park at Oceano Dunes. This free-wheeling zone near Pismo Beach at San Luis Obispo County's southern edge is the only beach in California where you can legally drive a car onto the sand.

Oceano has 3,600 acres, including an off-roading area where daredevils in all-terrain vehicles blast their way through the dunes with abandon.

In between you can explore a string of vast and beautiful coastal wilderness parks, preserves, and beaches, among them Morro Bay State Park, site of a great blue heron rookery, and Montaña de Oro, or "mountain of gold," an 8,000-acre state park named for the brilliant display of golden wildflowers that bloom there each spring.

If you take the time to detour off Highway 101 in favor of the slower,

THE SLO COAST





coastal Highway 1, you'll be pleasantly surprised by the offerings up and down the SLO coast.

This is a particularly choice region for sea kayaking, and you'll find great spots for surfing, swimming, and fishing, too. The area also is heaven for bird-watchers and nature lovers in general. The National Audubon Society routinely ranks Morro Bay among National Audubon's top 10 for the huge number of species spotted during the annual Christmas bird count. You'll spy otters in the waters here, and gray whales cruising along the coast during their annual migration. Each winter thousands of vivid orange butterflies converge on Pismo Beach's Monarch Butterfly Grove, the largest in California.

The beach towns here are an eclectic mix, and you'll find much to like about the SLO coast's down-to-earth, no-airs style. The best part: You can go

SURFING BY THE PISMO BEACH PIER





DOWNTOWN PISMO BEACH

to sleep at a beachfront inn or rustic campground listening to waves crashing onto the shore and still be just a short drive away from the wine-country delights of Paso Robles and the city of San Luis Obispo.

Each cluster of beach towns has its own distinct feel and offerings. On the county's southern end, you'll find a string of beach communities just a few miles from downtown San Luis Obispo and the Cal Poly campus. Farthest south is Oceano, which has a popular campground right on the sand near Pismo Beach and vendors ready to rent you ATVs for some off-roading action. Nearby Pismo, the "Clam Capital of the World," is a rough-and-tumble town of about 8,000 residents. The downside: Pismo has a gritty side with a downtown pier area rife with tattoo parlors and tacky souvenir shops. The upside: 23 miles of sandy white beaches and a lively surf scene. It's fun to walk out on the Pismo Pier to watch the expert surfers working the swell and the local fishermen hauling in dinner.

At the northern edge of Pismo Beach, you'll want to savor Shell Beach, a compact beach neighborhood with several very inviting bluff-top hotels and a peaceful, beautiful public beach. Shell Beach is a good choice for an idyllic escape whether you're visiting the San Luis Obispo area for work or play.

ON THE PISMO PIER



Next comes Avila Beach, a seaside town that was forced to bulldoze and rebuild its quaint downtown in the late 1990s after one of California's worst coastal oil leaks slowly contaminated the entire area. Much of Avila Beach was out of commission for several years, but the town is back to welcoming visitors. The funky pink 1960s-era Inn at Avila Beach still overlooks the shore, but downtown has been largely rebuilt with sherbet-colored shops, cafés, and hotels along the beach. This clean and perky new Avila feels a bit like Downtown Disney, but with a beach. Two miles up the road, the nat-



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AVILA





STROLLING AROUND AVILA BEACH

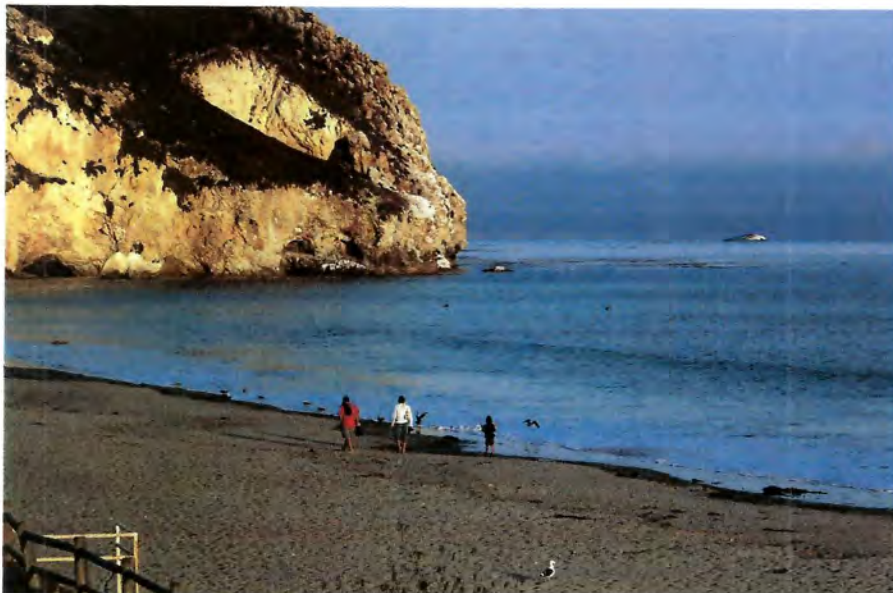
ural hot springs at Sycamore Mineral Springs Resort have been a Central Coast sanctuary since the 1800s.

Along the northern end of SLO County, you'll find another cluster of beach communities. About 20 miles up the coast from Avila Beach, Morro Bay is a working fishing village with a touristy but highly likable Embarcadero area of waterfront shops, restaurants, and other attractions. The towering bulk of Morro Rock rises just offshore, the town's dominant and almost always visible landmark. Morro Bay is one of California's lushest bird sanctuaries. You can rent a kayak on the Embarcadero (or at one of two nearby state parks) and paddle out to

an estuary abounding with cormorants, herons, pelicans, seagulls, and many other species. Right in the middle of the bay, there's a barge where dozens of sea lions like to lounge in a noisy, jostling heap sunning themselves, barely glancing up as kayakers and sailors glide past their playground and snap photos.

Past Morro Bay on Highway 1, you'll reach Cayucos, a beach hamlet with a 900-foot-long wooden pier. *Men's Journal* lauds tiny Cayucos as one of its 25 favorite "hideouts and secret spots." Indeed, this is a sweet spot to pull over and stroll the pier. Come here to fish or to just watch the gaggle of young surfers in the water waiting for the next set.

AVILA BEACH



Q&A

WITH CENTRAL COAST SURFER
AND AUTHOR ERIC SODERQUIST

Q: While working on *The California Surf Project*, you roamed beaches from the Oregon border to Baja Mexico. How do the Central Coast beaches stack up in terms of surf spots?

ES: The Central Coast is unique and beautiful. There are plenty of surf spots, but it's the whole experience that makes me love our little gem.

Q: What's your favorite local beach?

ES: Old Shell Beach is my favorite. My aunt owned the Shell Beach Café for over 20 years and the whole family grew up working there. It's now **Zorro's Café** (805-773-9676; 927 Shell Beach Rd.). I live down the street and wander down on my bike to surf. There's a great community, especially the old guys at the dog park. My favorite spots are just north of my home. Get as close to the beach as you can and glance around at the reefs, find a nook and enjoy.



Courtesy of Chronicle Books

Q: What's the best spot for kayaking?

ES: Kayaking is fabulous around **Dinosaur Park** (an 11-acre oceanfront park along Shell Beach Road in Pismo Beach; pismo-beach.org), just south of my house. The caves, cliffscapes, and wildlife are very inspiring.





SAN SIMEON

photo by Chris Burkard, courtesy of Chronicle Books

Q: What are your favorite breakfast places?

ES: My favorite spot is **Zorro's**. Also, **Seaside Cafe** (805-773-4360; 1327 Shell Beach Rd.) is where I start my day with a great cup of illy coffee; they have epic pastries too, and you have to try the eggs Benedict.

Q: Is there a must-visit spot for first-time travelers to the SLO Coast?

ES: Wander the San Luis Creek (in downtown San Luis Obispo) on **Farmer's Market** Thursday from 7–9 P.M. Stroll through the **Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa** and have a glass of wine at **Novo** (See San Luis Obispo chapter).

Shell Beach resident Eric Soderquist is co-author with Chris Burkard of The California Surf Project, a beautifully illustrated diary of two surfers who quit their jobs, packed up their boards, and surfed their way down the coast.

More info: thebookprojectca.com.

Fifteen miles farther up the road, Cambria is a quirky, art-centric town that proclaims itself “free of chain stores and brimming with charm.” True on both counts. Cambria is a community of about 6,000 residents, including a good number of artists, musicians, and poets. The town boasts two particularly notable natural attributes: the stands of towering Monterey pine trees that encircle the city and tranquil Moonstone Beach, so named for the lovely white, translucent stones found there. You’ll find a wealth of small shops and galleries as you meander around town.

Many visitors come to Cambria en route to the Big Sur coast or as part of a pilgrimage to Hearst Castle, which is about 6 miles away at San Simeon. Northward from the castle along this scenic and sometimes foggy stretch of US Highway 1 lie the Piedras Blancas elephant seal rookery, the Monterey County line, and the winding wilds of the Big Sur Coast.

Many visitors choose Cambria as a base camp while visiting the castle. It’s also a straight shot along scenic Highway 46 from the coast to the Paso Robles wine country.

But almost any spot on the SLO Coast makes a good base of operations for an extended stay, because everything is so relatively close. Between Oceano to the south and San Simeon to the north, a mere hour’s drive, you have access to a wide range of camping, hiking, eating, and pampering pleasures, both urban and rural, from goggling at the gold-leafed domain of America’s true royalty at Hearst Castle to hunkering over a paper plate on a weathered outdoor patio at Morro Bay, where ice-cold beers and sublime Dungeness crab quesadillas are served up to hungry kayakers. From a traveler’s point of view, it’s hard to imagine another 60-mile stretch of highway that offers a more varied array of vistas, experiences, and opportunities to learn, relax, and play.

GUIDANCE **Avila Beach Business Association** (visitavilabeach.com). Information about Avila attractions and events.

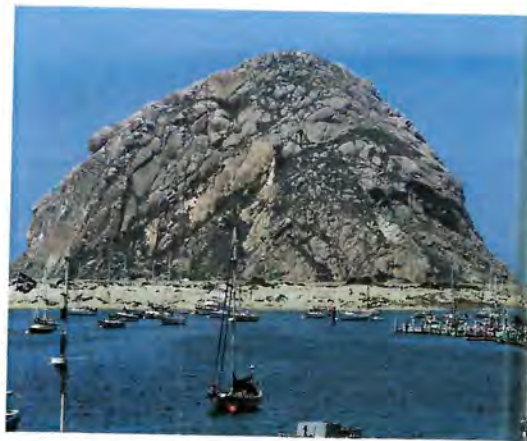
Cambria Chamber of Commerce (805-927-3624; cambriachamber.org) is at 767 Main St., Cambria 93428.

Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center (805-772-4467; morrobay.org), 845 Embarcadero Rd., Suite D, Morro Bay 93442.

Pelican Network (pelicannetwork.net). A nature directory of the Central Coast.

Pismo Beach Conference & Visitors Bureau (805-773-7034; classiccalifornia.com), 581 Dolliver St., Pismo Beach 93449. The **Pismo Beach Chamber of Commerce** (805-773-4382; <http://pismochamber.com>) is at the same address.

San Luis Obispo County Visitors and Conference Bureau (805-541-8000; sanluisobispo.com/visitors/ca-central-coast-towns/pismo-beach), 811 El Cap-



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itan Way, #200, San Luis Obispo 93401. Check online for information about SLO beach towns.

Surflife (surflife.com). Check surf conditions along the coast.

GETTING THERE San Luis Obispo County is about 200 miles north of Los Angeles and 220 miles south of San Francisco.

By car:

From Southern California: Head north on US Hwy. 101 until you reach the San Luis Obispo area and you'll see signs for each of the beach cities. You also can reach coastal SLO from the south via US Hwy. 1, which passes Oceano, Pismo Beach (and its Shell Beach area), Avila Beach, Morro Bay, Cambria, and San Simeon.

From San Francisco: Head south on the 101, the most direct route. Travelers also can opt for the scenic coastal route along Hwy. 1, by way of Big Sur.

From the east, including Fresno and Bakersfield: Take Hwy. 46 west. To reach San Luis Obispo County's northern beach cities, you'll stay on Hwy. 46, through Paso Robles, until you reach Hwy. 1 and the town of Cambria on the coast. If you're heading to the southern end of SLO, take Hwy. 46 to Paso Robles, then head south on Hwy. 101.

By air: **San Luis Obispo County Regional Airport** (805-781-5205; sloairport.com), 903-5 Airport Dr., San Luis Obispo 93401, is located just south of the city of San Luis Obispo off Hwy. 101. The terminal has free WiFi. (See the San Luis Obispo chapter for information about airlines and rental cars.)

Ride-On Transportation (805-541-8747; ride-on.org)—a nonprofit, community-based cooperative—provides shuttle service from the airport and Amtrak station.

DOWNTOWN MORRO BAY



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The airport website (sloairport.com) also lists taxis and limousine operators currently serving the airport.

By train: **Amtrak** (local station 805-541-0505; nationwide reservations 800-872-724; amtrak.com), 1011 Railroad Ave., San Luis Obispo 93401, runs its Pacific Surfliner service daily between San Diego and San Luis Obispo. Amtrak's Coast Starlight service runs from Los Angeles to Seattle, with stops in San Luis Obispo. Amtrak also serves Grover Beach.

By bus: **Santa Barbara Airbus** (800-423-1618; santabarbaraairbus.com) offers coach service from Los Angeles International Airport to the Central Coast, with stops in San Luis Obispo and Pismo Beach.

Greyhound bus terminal (800-231-2222; greyhound.com) is now located at the San Luis Obispo Amtrak station.

GETTING AROUND San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority (805-781-4472; slorta.org) offers bus service connecting cities in San Luis Obispo County.

RTA-South County Area Transit (805-781-4472; scatransit.org) provides bus service in the county's southern beach communities, including Shell Beach, Pismo Beach, Grover Beach, Arroyo Grande, and Oceano. The county's regional transit service also operates the trolleys in three local beach communities.

Avila Beach Trolley (805-781-4472; avilatrolley.org) runs from downtown Avila Beach to Spyglass Dr. in Shell Beach on weekends. Free.

Cambria Village Trolley (cambriachamber.org) runs along Main St., past the village shops, galleries, and eateries, and goes to Moonstone Beach, too. Free.

VIEWS OF SCENIC SHELL BEACH



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SLO COUNTY: TOP ATTRACTIONS

1. Hearst Castle
2. Missions: Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa and Mission San Miguel Arcangel
3. Beaches: Avila, Cayucos, Morro Strand, Oceano, Pismo, San Simeon
4. Wineries: Paso Robles and San Luis Obispo (Edna Valley and Arroyo Grande) Wine Regions
5. Scenic Highway 1

—Source: San Luis Obispo County Visitors and Conference Bureau

Morro Bay Trolley (morro-bay.ca.us) runs from Memorial Day weekend through the first weekend in October. There are three different routes through town, including service from the Morro Strand campground to the Embarcadero. \$1 adults, 50 cents children.

*** To See**

HISTORIC SITES The SLO coast has two landmark lighthouses. **The Point San Luis Lighthouse** (805-546-4904; sanluislighthouse.org) was built in 1890 near Avila Beach. A West Coast listening station during World War II, the lighthouse was updated in 1969 when its Fresnel lens was replaced by an automated electric light. The lighthouse's grounds offer dramatic vistas stretching from Avila to the Vandenberg Air Force Base to the south, and you can often see whales, sea lions, and otters along the coast here. Public tours are offered on Sunday. Docent-led hikes on the Pecho Coast Trail also are available. **Piedras Blancas Lighthouse** (805-927-2968; blm.gov), located just north of San Simeon, is named for a white rock outcropping located off the end of the point. In 1866 this location was chosen to fill the gap between the lighthouses at Point Conception and Point Sur. Tours of the light station are offered Tue., Thu., and Sat.

Nit Wit Ridge (805-927-2690), 881 Hillcrest Dr., Cambria, is a historic landmark of a different type: Garbage collector Arthur Harold Bea built this house entirely of junk—rocks, wood, beer cans, tile, car parts, and abalone shells—during the course of 51 years. He called it his Hearst Castle. Nit Wit Ridge may be an offbeat roadside attraction, but it's also considered folk art architecture and designated as a California State Historic Landmark. The current owners, Michael and Stacey O'Malley, offer tours; \$10 donations are suggested.

SEA LIONS BATTLING FOR SPACE ON A BARGE IN THE HARBOR



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THE HEARST CASTLE

On a hilltop overlooking coastal Hwy. 1, with glorious views of pastures and Pacific waves, tycoon William Randolph Hearst's palatial mansion stands in all its Gilded Age splendor—now a museum, state park, historic landmark, and working cattle ranch (the grass-fed, humanely raised beef it produces is justly prized). La Cuesta Encantada, the Enchanted Hill, otherwise known as Hearst Castle, ranks among California's most enduring and popular attractions.

Located 40 miles north of San Luis Obispo, Hearst Castle (800-444-4445; hearstcastle.org; 750 Hearst Castle Rd., San Simeon 93452) is adjacent to a beautiful San Simeon State Park, which features hiking, camping, and other activities. With more than a million visitors a year, the castle lags behind only the big theme parks to the south in popularity as a tourist destination. If you plan on touring the castle, book reservations ahead of time online.

The property began as a coastal cattle ranch founded in 1865 by George Hearst, a miner who struck it rich during the California Gold Rush. His son, newspaper magnate William Randolph Hearst, decided to build a modest bungalow with a great view of the ranch he had loved as a boy. But the project, designed by architect Julia Morgan and built in 1919, soon expanded to a Moorish castle that incorporated architectural styles, sculptures, and art that Hearst had admired from all over Europe, from mausoleums to coliseums. The finished mansion ended up at 90,000 square feet, with 56 bedrooms, 61 bathrooms, 19 sitting rooms, ornate pools inside and out, a theater, an airfield, a private zoo, and 127 acres of gardens. Presidents and starlets, celebrities and kingmakers flocked to the rich man's playground by the sea: Franklin Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, Charles Lindbergh, Charlie Chaplin, the Marx Brothers, Cary Grant, Clark Gable, Greta Garbo, Mary Pickford, and Howard Hughes all stayed and played at the castle, just to name a few from Hearst's A-list.

There is so much to see and do at the castle that you can visit it many times and have a different experience each time.

* To Do

BEACHES The SLO coast spans more than 60 miles. Cruise Hwy. 1 and pull over when you see someplace you like. At the county's northern end, **Morro Strand State Beach** (805-772-2560; parks.ca.gov), 2 miles south of Cayucos off Hwy. 1, **Montaña de Oro State Park** (805-528-0513; parks.ca.gov), 6 miles south of Morro Bay, and **San Simeon State Park** (805-927-202; parks.ca.gov), close to Hearst Castle, are all choice spots for swimming, hiking, beachcombing, and picnicking. The parks are open for day use as well as overnight camping.

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CASTLE TOURS

There are five guided tours at the castle. Tour 1: The Experience Tour is a 1¼-hour overview of the castle and grounds recommended for first-time visitors, who get to ogle the outdoor Neptune Pool that took 12 years to build and the indoor Roman Pool with its blue tiles and flecks of real gold shimmering throughout. It starts at the visitors center near the estate entrance and includes a bus ride up the hill. Other tours are more focused: one limits itself just to the upper floors of the main house; another devotes 1¼ hours to the North Wing; there's an outdoor garden tour; and the Evening Tour lets visitors experience the castle at night, just like the glitterati who flocked here in the Roaring Twenties. There is also a new "Gardens and Vistas" self-guided tour, which is offered from March through Labor Day weekend and allows visitors to stroll the castle's gardens in late afternoon. Tours cost \$24 adults, \$12 ages 17 and under, with children under 6 admitted for free; the Evening Tour costs \$30.

HEARST RANCH

The surrounding lands are used to graze cattle and are still owned by the Hearst Corporation. The grass-fed beef can be purchased at Hearst Castle store or online, or eaten at local restaurants. Sebastian's General Store and Cafe (805-927-3307; 442 Slo San Simeon Rd., San Simeon) is known for its French dip and barbecue using the hormone-free, grass-fed beef from the ranch.

THE VISITORS CENTER

features a museum store, a gift shop, and a theater that shows *Hearst Castle: Building the Dream* every 45 minutes on a five-story-tall screen.

W. R. HEARST MEMORIAL STATE BEACH AND SAN SIMEON STATE PARK

The beautiful sandy beach has picnic sites, barbecue grills, restrooms, and easy beach access; kayaks and boogie bards can be rented, and there is fishing from San Simeon Pier. San Simeon State Park's coastal bluffs offer unobstructed ocean views, archaeological sites, hiking, fishing, and whale-watching. The park also offers a Junior Ranger Program for children.

The pier at **Cayucos** is a popular local surf spot, though Surflife.com notes that surfers usually will find consistently better waves farther south along the coast near Pismo Beach. **Moonstone Beach** in Cambria (sanluisobispo.com) is a gorgeous area with a boardwalk that shadows the coast. You'll often spot birds, seals, and other wildlife along the shore.

At the county's southern end, **Oceano Dunes State Recreational Area** (805-473-7220; parks.ca.gov) offers off-roading in the dunes; **Pismo State Beach** (805-489-1869; parks.ca.gov) has hiking, swimming, and surf fishing. You also can swim





PARASAILING OVER SHELL BEACH

and stroll the sand near the **Pismo Pier**, get lost on the secluded beach at **Shell Beach** (there's a public access location near the Cliffs Resort), and play along the waterfront in downtown **Avila Beach**.

GOLF Avila Beach Golf Resort

(805-595-4000; avilabeachresort.com), 6450 Ana Bay Rd., Avila Beach 93424. This seaside resort includes a par 71, 6,500-yard championship course. The front nine holes are situated within oak-lined valleys. The back nine transverse a tidal estuary. It's a challenging course in a lovely setting.

Morro Bay Golf Course (805-782-8060; slocountyparks.com), 201 State

Park Rd., Morro Bay 93442. This 18-hole course offers exercise in a bucolic natural setting in the heart of Morro Bay State Park. There's a pro shop and driving range; rental clubs and lessons also are available.

SEA KAYAKING along the coast here is a blast, and no prior experience is needed. Morro Bay, Avila Beach, and Montaña de Oro State Park are all choice spots, and you can find rentals anywhere you go (sanluisobispocounty.com). One favorite nature zone: Rent kayaks on the Embarcadero and within minutes you'll be paddling toward the towering hulk of Morro Rock in the distance. The bay here teems with herons, gulls, pelicans, and dozens of other species, and the calm waters have an abundance of sea grass and kelp, excellent environments for sea life and the

THE GOLF COURSE AT MORRO BAY STATE PARK



ELEPHANT SEAL COLONY AT PIEDRAS BLANCAS

No trip up Highway 1 in the Central Coast is complete without a stop at Piedras Blancas, home to one of California's largest elephant seal rookeries, where you can see the giant seals barking, bellowing, battling for mating rights, and basking in the sun.

About 15,000 animals call this stretch of sand and rocky waters home. The 70-pound newborn pups are adorable, but the bulls are seriously intimidating. They can reach 16 feet and 3 tons, three times the weight of the average female.

The vista point at Piedras Blancas (elephantseal.org) is 4.4 miles north of Hearst Castle on Highway 1—look for the parking lot on the ocean side of the highway, where you'll find great viewing spots overlooking the mammoth sea mammals. Docents are on hand to answer questions.

There is no charge and no reservations needed; the viewing area is open 8 AM–sunset year round. Pregnant females arrive in December to give birth at Piedras Blancas, then wean the frisky pups through March while the males, with their elephantine probosci, roar like, well, elephants.

ELEPHANT SEALS AT PIEDRAS BLANCAS ON HWY. 1



critters that feed on it. You'll cruise past sea lions swimming beside you in the bay and, if you're lucky, you'll spot a few otters, too. **Rock Kayak** (805-772-2906; rockkayak.com; 845 Embarcadero St., Morro Bay) is an experienced outfitter located right on the Embarcadero. Staff members will give you some quick training and safety tips before you set out.

* Wineries

Harmony Cellars (805-927-1625; harmonycellars.com), 255 Harmony Valley Rd., Harmony 93435. Open daily 10 AM–5 PM. The town of Harmony (population 18) is little more than a small cluster of small businesses a few miles south of Cambria. You could easily zip past on Hwy. 1 (as most people do) and miss this charming hilltop winery. Founded in 1989 by Chuck and Kim Mulligan, Harmony Cellars has grown from a 2,000-case micro winery to a 5,500-case boutique production facility. The Mulligans produce a variety of wines, including Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, Syrah, Zinfandel, Merlot, and Harmonie, a white table wine that's a blend of





PEACOCKS ROAM KELSEY SEE CANYON VINEYARDS

Chardonnay, Chenin Blanc, and White Riesling. The winery has a spacious tasting room with a long bar for unhurried tasting sessions, as well as a pretty outdoor garden with sweeping views that's ideal for an off-the-beaten-path picnic. But be careful that you don't overindulge: The narrow road back down the hillside could be tricky to navigate after one too many glasses of wine.

Kelsey See Canyon Vineyards (805-595-9700; kelseywine.com), 1947 See Canyon Rd., San Luis Obispo 93405. Open daily 11 AM–5 PM. Hidden away between Avila Beach and San Luis Obispo, the Kelsey Winery is a likable family farm with a tasting room attached to a big white barn. A flock of outspoken peacocks roams the front vineyard and stare dolefully at visitors from the farmhouse roof. What began as a retirement project in 1999 blossomed into a full-time labor of love for winery owners Dick and Dolores Kelsey. The apples used in their Apple Chardonnay and Apple Merlot are harvested from decades-old orchards on the family ranch in See Canyon, where the winery's Chardonnay grapes also are grown.

* Lodging

From oceanfront campgrounds to deluxe beach inns, the SLO coast offers a range of accommodations and a tradition of hospitable service. Many properties welcome pets. Prices peak during summer, though many hotels still are less expensive than their counterparts in Big Sur and Santa Barbara. In winter months you can find real bargains on hotel rooms.

✎ **Avila La Fonda Hotel** (805-595-700; avilalafondahotel.com;

info@avilalafondahotel.com), 101 San Miguel St., Avila Beach 93424. Expensive—very expensive. Credit cards are accepted. Avila La Fonda borrows its name from Santa Fe's La Fonda Hotel, a landmark just steps from the New Mexico city's central plaza. Owner Micheal Kidd wanted to create his own Mission-style retreat at the center of Avila Beach. He built his La Fonda from the ground up with attention to every detail: The facade, for example,

is a modern version of traditional Mexican casa architecture. The Spanish Mission-style lobby is the same width as the San Miguel and Lompoc missions. Thirty-five of the hotel's stained-glass windows depict early Avila Beach, and a mural outside portrays the beach town before the first settlers arrived. The hotel offers 30 suites with cushy extras, such as Jacuzzi tubs for two, and 12-cup coffeemakers and grinders with fresh coffee beans. There's also a snack pantry with inexpensive sodas and treats. Avila La Fonda is a block from the beach and walking distance to restaurants and shops in the compact downtown area. Kidd also owns the nearby Inn at Avila Beach, a funky pink outpost (at 256 Front St.; avilabeachca.com) with a great rooftop deck overlooking the beach.

🐾 & 🍷 Avila Village Inn (800-454-0840; avilavillageinn.com), 6655 Bay Laurel Dr., Avila Beach 93424. Moderate-expensive. Credit cards are accepted. Located a mile from the beach, this pretty Craftsman-style inn opened

its doors in 2005 and is an especially good choice for pet lovers (dogs are welcome) and golfers (the Avila Beach Resort Golf Course is right next door). The inn's 30 rooms are decorated with Mission-style furniture and have fireplaces, wet bars, and flat-screen TVs; there's a separate building with a fitness center. The inn has rental bicycles, and guests can pedal from the nearby Bob Jones Bike Path to the beach.

🐾 & Blue Dolphin Inn (800-222-0159; cambriainns.com; bluedolphininn@cambriainns.com), 647 Moonstone Beach Dr., Cambria 93428. Expensive. Credit cards are accepted. Located on Moonstone Beach, the Blue Dolphin is an upscale property that caters to adults looking for a quiet getaway. (The hotel's owner also owns the nearby Sand Pebbles Inn, which welcomes children.) The inn's contemporary rooms are freshly remodeled and very comfortable, with pillow-top mattresses and 32-inch flat-screen TV. Six specialty oceanfront rooms are

AVILA LA FONDA HOTEL IN AVILA BEACH





VIEWS OF SCENIC SHELL BEACH

named (and designed) for bodies of water around the world where dolphins are found. Guests have a choice of staying, for example, in Key Biscayne (with white wooden beach-style furnishings and wicker porch chairs that evoke the Florida Keys) or Saldanha Bay (with a four-poster dark wood bed and African prints and accents that feel like the savanna). Nice touch: Rates include a complimentary breakfast delivered to your room at the time of your choosing. So you can start your day by sipping java and freshly made waffles while gazing out to the sea. Free Internet, and pets are welcome.

🐾 & ♿ **Cliffs Resort** (800-826-7827, 805-773-5000; cliffsresort.com), 757 Shell Beach Rd. (just off the 101, in the Shell Beach section of Pismo Beach), Shell Beach 93449. Moderate-expensive. Credit cards are accepted. Located 10 miles from downtown San Luis Obispo, the Cliffs is an airy beachfront hotel that renovated all 160 guest rooms in 2009 with modern, sand-colored furnishings and floor-to-ceiling plantation shutters. Many rooms are less than \$200 a night, even in summer, though prices go up for

ocean views. Popular with both families and business travelers, the Cliffs is convenient to everything in the SLO area but not in the middle of anything, except an incredible natural setting. As its name suggests, the hotel sits atop a cliff and overlooks a pristine sweep of beach below. A path at the edge of the property meanders down to a secluded cove, where you can swim or explore a rocky peninsula with dozens of tide

CLIFFS RESORT IN SHELL BEACH



pools. The hotel also has a restaurant, plus an inviting pool area with a fire pit and great views.

🐾 & 🏠 Dolphin Bay Resort & Spa (805-773-4300; thedolphinbay.com; sdamery@thedolphinbay.com), 2727 Shell Beach Rd., Shell Beach 93449. Expensive—very expensive. Credit cards are accepted. This is a luxury-minded resort with very spacious, fully equipped one- and two-bedroom villas originally designed as condo units. All 63 villas have kitchens with granite countertops and a full complement of appliances, though you might want to forgo cooking to enjoy the sophisticated California cuisine served in the hotel's Lido restaurant. Executive chef Evan Treadwell specializes in creative fare using local ingredients; he also offers monthly cooking classes at the hotel. Dolphin Bay is a Mediterranean-style resort that sits atop an oceanfront bluff. It's a scenic spot and just a short stroll along a beach path to Shell Beach's secluded cove. (The hotel is

next door to the Cliffs Resort.) The property is a particularly good choice for an extended-stay getaway. Heated pool.

🏠 & 🏠 Embarcadero Inn (805-772-2700; embarcaderoinn.com; info@embarcaderoinn.com), 456 Embarcadero, Morro Bay, in the heart of Morro Bay. Moderate. Credit cards are accepted. Located within walking distance of many Embarcadero restaurants and shops, this is a pleasant and affordable small hotel with prime views of Morro Bay. The inn's 33 rooms are spacious and equipped with refrigerator, microwave, and coffee maker; many have fireplace. All stays include a complimentary continental breakfast.

🌿 🏠 & 🏠 Inn at Morro Bay (800-321-9566, 805-772-5651; innatmorrobay.com; info@innatmorrobay.com), 60 State Park Rd. (just inside the state park, across from the golf course), Morro Bay 93442. Moderate—expensive. Credit cards are accepted.

AT THE EMBARCADERO IN MORRO BAY



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THE CLIFFS

Nature lovers will adore this picture-perfect white inn perched in the middle of a vast heron sanctuary. Nestled on 4,000 acres, the 98-room hotel sits inside Morro Bay State Park and has a soothing ambience. Rooms are decorated in a simple French country style; the most popular are bay-view rooms, which boast private hot tubs on outdoor patios overlooking the bay—an unexpected luxury in the middle of a nature preserve. “You can see a lot of wildlife out there,” says Diana Hanauer, the inn’s general manager. (Budget note: During the winter off-season, rooms rate drop as low as \$59 a night.) The Inn at Morro Bay celebrated its 50th birthday in 2009 and has been undergoing renovation work throughout the property. The decor includes some new personal touches including a series of park wildlife photographs taken by Hanauer and other hotel staffers. (Budget note: During the winter off-season, rooms rate drop as low as \$59 a night.) The inn’s waterfront restaurant, Orchid, is a lovely setting with bay views and very good food, including a killer chocolate lava cake. This unpretentious retreat offers a welcome respite from the bustling scene at Morro Bay’s Embarcadero.

Pool, golf, kayaking, bird-watching, hiking.

☎ **Kon Tiki Inn** (805-773-4833; kontikiinn.com; kontiki@charterinternet.com), 1621 Price St., Pismo Beach 93449. Moderate. Credit cards are accepted. This is a big, clean, no-frills hotel with a tropical motif and a friendly office staff decked out in Hawaiian shirts. Rooms are basic and a bit dated, but the big selling point of the Kon Tiki—and the reason families return year after year—is that every single room has a balcony and a great ocean view. There’s a pool and hot tub area, and you can walk down to the beach. A continental breakfast is included. Steamers is the on-site restaurant.

☎ **Olallieberry Inn** (805-927-3222, 888-927-3222; olallieberry.com; info@olallieberry.com), 2476 Main St., Cambria 93428. Moderate-expensive. This cute little B&B was built in 1873 and is one of the oldest buildings in Cambria. There are nine guest rooms—six in the main house and three in the innkeeper’s cottage. Rooms have fireplace and private bath and are furnished with antiques. Days here start with a bountiful breakfast with such favorites as olallieberry-

stuffed French pancakes, or fresh fruit and enjoy wine and dining signature with—you go. Owners Ma and Larry E classes. The rounded by a faithful fo return year walk to the

☎ **Pickford** 888-270-84 innkeeper@ 2555 MacLa Daily, week Credit card. bria mansio an upscale 1 stars of the ford, Rudol more, Clara who cavorte Hearst’s ne House has offers lodgi you have to away from t cious, them antiques an dining room saloon-like Patricia Mc behaved pe

☎ **Sand** 9970; camb @sandpebb stone Beach Moderate- accepted. T inn is a fam steps from scenic Moo comfy (bed es); some h with ocean

THE SLO COAST



stuffed French toast, ricotta cheese pancakes, or olallieberry yogurt with fresh fruit and granola. At 5 PM guests enjoy wine and hors d'oeuvres, including signature dishes like baked Brie with—you guessed it—olallieberries. Owners Marjorie Ott and Marilyn and Larry Draper also offer cooking classes. The Olallieberry Inn is surrounded by a lush garden and attracts a faithful following of guests who return year after year. It's a short walk to the village.

🐾 & **Pickford House** (805-927-8619, 888-270-8470; thepickfordhouse.com; innkeeper@thepickfordhouse.com), 2555 MacLeod Way, Cambria 93428. Daily, weekly, and monthly rates. Credit cards are accepted. This Cambria mansion opened in the 1980s as an upscale B&B dedicated to the film stars of the 1920s (such as Mary Pickford, Rudolph Valentino, John Barrymore, Clara Bow, and Lillian Gish) who cavorted at William Randolph Hearst's nearby castle. The Pickford House has switched gears and now offers lodging for group stays only, so you have to rent the house. Located away from town, the inn has nine spacious, themed rooms adorned with antiques and claw-foot tubs; there's a dining room and 1860s-era bar with a saloon-like atmosphere. Innkeeper Patricia Moore welcomes "well-behaved pets and children."

🏠 & **Sand Pebbles Inn** (800-222-9970; cambriainns.com; guestservices@sandpebblesinn.com), 6252 Moonstone Beach Dr., Cambria 93428. Moderate-expensive. Credit cards are accepted. This inviting sand-colored inn is a family-friendly property that's steps from the boardwalk on Cambria's scenic Moonstone Beach. Rooms are comfy (beds have pillow-top mattresses); some have fireplaces and patios with ocean views. Nightly rates include

a continental breakfast. Check the hotel website for specials. DVD library, Internet access.

& **Sycamore Mineral Springs Resort** (805-595-7302; sycamore-springs.com; info@smsr.com), 215 Avila Beach Dr. (just up the road from Avila Beach), San Luis Obispo 93405. Moderate-expensive. Credit cards are accepted. This lush sanctuary has been a destination spa since 1886 and remains a timeless oasis surrounded by more than 100 acres of forest, hills, and meadows. The resort rests atop hot mineral springs. All rooms have private balcony tubs fed with sulfur mineral springs water, so you can sit and soak outside under a canopy of oak trees. The accommodations range from modest rooms to deluxe suites with four-poster beds and gas fireplaces. This isn't a sleek modern spa, but rather a well-tended older property that offers a tranquil getaway in a beautiful setting. Guests can stroll the grounds (or cruise in golf carts) to a wide range of spa treatments and daily tai chi, yoga, and Pilates classes in the yoga dome. The resort also has a meditation garden (including a labyrinth walking path), and miles of hiking and biking trails that wind through towering oaks and sycamore trees. The Gardens of Avila restaurant offers a menu of California cuisine infused with Asian flavors and a daily happy hour, too. The resort's redwood mineral tubs, classes, spa services, and restaurants also are open to day visitors.

CAMPING Popular campgrounds, especially near the coast, fill up fast during summer, so you'll want to book ahead. Some areas close down or limit offerings during off-season winter months. Be sure to call ahead or check online for the most current information.



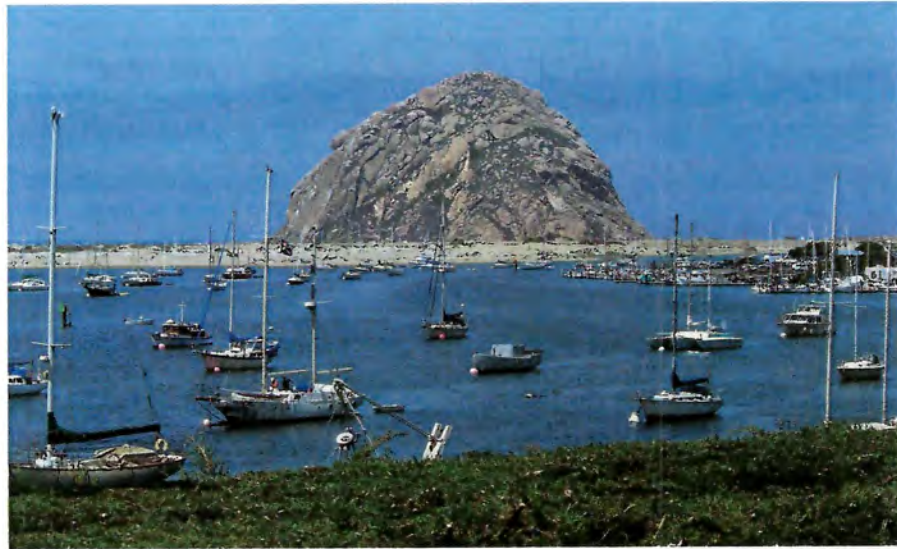
CAMPING TIP

Serious outdoor enthusiasts will want to pick up *California Camping* by Tom Stienstra, who has spent more than 25 years roaming the Golden State as the *San Francisco Chronicle's* outdoors writer. This hefty book is a detailed, authoritative guide to about 1,500 campgrounds, including dozens on California's Central Coast. Stienstra also offers pointers on campground cooking (including a recipe for homemade beef jerky to cut food costs), camping gear, fishing, and wilderness hazards like bears. The 16th edition of Stienstra's book was released in 2009. Many hard-core campers call it their bible.

#1 Morro Bay State Park (805-772-7434, reservations 800-444-7275; parks.ca.gov), Morro Bay State Park Rd. (a mile from Hwy. 1), Morro Bay 93442. This is one of California's most civilized state parks and even features an 18-hole golf course and a marina where you can rent kayaks. The campground here is very popular, so you'll want to make reservations as far in advance as possible. The park offers a wide range of activities for campers and day visitors. Come here to hike, sail, fish, and savor bird-watching amid

an amazing heron rookery, where you'll be treated to the sight of such unusual birds as white pelicans. Take a break from roughing it to enjoy dinner at Orchid, the bay-front restaurant at the Inn at Morro Bay, also located inside the 4,000-acre park. Overnight campers will find showers, restrooms, fire rings, and picnic tables; RV hookups are available, with a maximum camper length of 35 feet. There's also a small, and somewhat static, Natural History Museum on site that's not

MORRO BAY AND ITS FAMOUS MORRO ROCK LANDMARK



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nearly as interesting as the real-life natural setting right outside.

Morro Strand State Beach (805-772-2560, reservations 800-444-7275; parks.ca.gov) 2 miles south of Cayucos on Hwy. 1, Morro Bay 93442. Park kiosks open only in summer; reservations suggested. A 3-mile stretch of beach connects the southern and northern entrances to this scenic park. Fishing, windsurfing, jogging, and kite flying are popular activities at Morro Strand, which is available for day use as well as overnight camping. Morro Strand has picnic tables, restrooms, and a comfort station, but no showers. The maximum RV length is 24 feet. Reservations are required Memorial Day–Labor Day weekends. The Morro Bay Trolley stops in the park during summer, so you can hop on and ride to Morro Bay's nearby Embarcadero area.

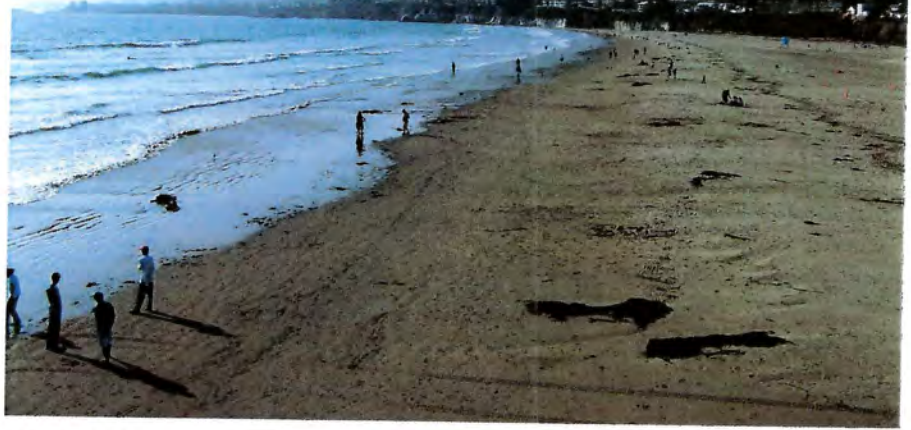
Montaña de Oro State Park (805-528-0513, reservations 800-444-7275; parks.ca.gov; slostateparks.com), 3550 Pecho Valley Rd. (6 miles south of Morro Bay), Los Osos 93402. Summer reservations needed. Montaña de Oro is one of California's largest and most glorious state parks. This vast coastal wonderland spans 8,000 acres of rugged cliffs, sandy beaches, canyons, and hills, including 1,347-foot Valencia Peak. It's open to the public for day use and also has campsites for tent camping and campers (the maximum length is 27 feet), as well as more rustic equestrian and environmental sites. Campsite reservations are required Memorial Day weekend–Labor Day; the rest of the year the campground is available on a first-come, first-served basis. Visitors will find restrooms and picnic areas. Docents at the park information center, open weekends throughout the year and daily during summer months, can answer questions

about park history and wildlife.

Oceano Dunes State Recreational Area (805-473-7220, reservations 800-444-7275; parks.ca.gov), 928 Pacific Blvd. (off Hwy. 1), Oceano 93445. Reservations highly recommended. Oceano is a playground for off-highway enthusiasts from throughout the United States, and it has the most extensive coastal dunes remaining in California. It's a noisy, raucous scene, so if you're looking for a quiet camping experience, go elsewhere. This is the only California beach that allows motorists to drive on the sand. Other activities here include swimming, surfing, surf fishing, and hiking. Camping is allowed on the beach and in the open dune area. Rangers recommend beach camping for visitors with four-wheel-drive vehicles only. Vault toilets and chemical toilets are provided. Campsites are available by reservation year-round; you can rent ATVs nearby. Try **BJ's ATV Rentals** (805-481-5411; bjsatvrentals.com). Owner John Aitkens and Evelyn Valentino have been in business here since 1982, and their guides put a premium on safety. Plan rides for the morning before the wind kicks up; the winter scene here is calmer than the craziness of summer. Nearby, you'll also find **Pismo State Beach** (805-489-1869, 805-473-7220), 555 Pier Ave., Oceano 93445, which offers hiking, swimming, surf fishing, and overnight camping. Campsites at Pismo State Beach have showers, restrooms, and fire rings.

Port San Luis (805-903-3395; portsanluis.com; camphost@portsanluis.com), Babe Lane, Avila Beach. RV camping is allowed in the Port San Luis area, and spaces are available on a first-come, first-served basis. No tent camping is allowed. Ten full-hookup sites are available off Babe Lane. In addition, camping is permitted in a





PISMO BEACH

portion of the Coastal Gateway trailer boat parking area. Campfires are prohibited, and all pets must be kept on leash. Call to make arrangements.

San Simeon State Park (805-927-2020; reservations 800-444-7275; parks.ca.gov), Van Gordon Creek Rd. at San Simeon Creek Rd., Cambria 93428. Reservations needed during summer months. San Simeon State Park is a beautiful public beach and campground 5 miles south of Hearst Castle. Come here to visit the castle, of course, but also to picnic, hike, fish, surf, beachcomb, and watch the birds and whales along the coast. Campground reservations can be made Mar. 15–Sept. 30; the rest of the year the campground is open on a first-come, first-served basis. The park's San Simeon Creek campground offers 115 campsites for tent camping or recreational vehicles. The creek runs through the campground, and it's a scenic spot. Each campsite has a fire ring and picnic table; there also are restrooms with flush toilets and coin-operated showers. The maximum length for an RV is 35 feet.

* Where to Eat

Cracked Crab (805-773-2722; crackedcrab.com), 751 Price St., Pismo Beach 93449. Open Sun.–Thu. 11 AM–9 PM, Fri.–Sat. 11 AM–10 PM. Moderate–expensive. Credit cards are accepted, but not reservations. Located between Main and Pomeroy Sts. in Pismo, the Cracked Crab serves heaping buckets of shellfish. Patrons get to mix and match their choice of several types of crab, shrimp, and slipper lobster, which are served with sides of corn on the cob, red potatoes, and spicy Cajun sausage. The house special, the Big Bucket For Two, is pricey (\$68), but it's a treat for diners who love seafood and don't mind wielding a wooden mallet to crack down on a messy meal. The menu includes other seafood entrées, along with token steak and chicken dishes; beer and wine are served. The Cracked Crab is a lively spot, and you might have to wait in line on weekends.

Custom House Restaurant (805-595-7555; oldcustomhouse.com), 404 Front St., Avila Beach 93424. Open Sun.–Thu. 8 AM–9 PM, Fri.–Sat. 8 AM–10 PM. Moderate–expensive. Cred-

it cards are accepted. The Custom House's history in Avila Beach dates back to the early 1900s when nearby San Luis Bay was designated an official US Port of Entry and a local builder put up the Old Custom House as the port's headquarters on the waterfront. In 1999 the historic building was razed, along with nearly everything else downtown, in the wake of a massive oil leak under the town. Then in 2002 the Custom House had a rebirth in a newly constructed restaurant on the same choice spot overlooking the beach and Avila's piers. It's an airy, upscale, crowd-pleasing outpost that serves seafood, steaks, sandwiches, and salads, along with a breakfast menu. There's a full bar inside. But the highlight of the Custom House is dining outside on the restaurant's inviting patio, where patrons (and their dogs) enjoy dining alfresco with views of the beach.

DePalo and Sons (805-773-1589), 2665-L Shell Beach Rd., Shell Beach. Open 7 AM–10 PM daily. Moderate. Credit cards are accepted. This neigh-

borhood deli and market has a few tables outside for dining, but mostly it's a bustling take-out eatery where you can grab a gourmet sandwich or ready-made meal to go. DePalo and Sons is close to the shore in Shell Beach; it's a handy spot to stop for picnic provisions before you hit the beach for the day.

F. McLintocks (805-773-1892; mclintocks.com), 750 Mattie Rd., Shell Beach 93449. Open Mon.–Thu. 4:30–9 PM, Fri. 4–9:30 PM, Sat. 4–10 PM, Sun. 4–9 PM. Expensive. Credit cards are accepted, as are reservations. McLintocks is an oak-pit place with a boisterous cowboy personality and a country music soundtrack. This is the original F. McLintocks restaurant that debuted on the Central Coast more than three decades ago, and it has attracted a loyal following ever since. (The other outposts are in Arroyo Grande, Paso Robles, and San Luis Obispo.) There's a good (if pricey) selection of steaks on the menu, along with burgers and a selection of rib-sticking appetizers. The offerings are tasty and filling. What more could you want?

THE CUSTOM HOUSE OFFERS ALFRESCO DINING WITH VIEWS OF THE BEACH



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THE SPLASH CAFE IN PISMO BEACH

Giuseppe's Cucina Italiana (805-773-2870; giuseppesrestaurant.com), 891 Price St., Pismo Beach 93449. Open Mon.–Fri. 11:30 AM–3 PM, Sun.–Thu. 4:30–10 PM, Fri.–Sat. 4:30–11 PM; Giuseppe's Express opens daily at 11 AM. Moderate–expensive. Credit cards are accepted, but not reservations. For 20 years Giuseppe Difronzo has been serving up fresh southern Italian fare, just-baked bread, and an extensive wine list in Pismo Beach. The restaurant's homemade pastas are good, and include a flavorful roasted butternut squash ravioli. There's also an ample pizza menu, from a simple Margherita (fresh tomatoes, basil, and buffalo mozzarella) to the more adventurous Diavolo pizza (organic spicy Tuscan salami, Gaeta olives, house marinated hot peppers, and creamy mozzarella). Giuseppe's has opened a satellite deli across the street, Giuseppe's Express (at 800

Price St.), so you can grab an Italian cheese steak sandwich on the run if you aren't up for a sit-down meal.

Splash Cafe (805-773-4653; splashcafe.com), 197 Pomeroy Ave., Pismo Beach 93449. Open Sun.–Thu. 8 AM–8:30 PM, Fri.–Sat. 8 AM–9 PM. Inexpensive. Credit cards are accepted. Don't let the line snaking out the door scare you away. It moves fast. And Splash Cafe definitely is worth the wait. Located in downtown Pismo, just a short stroll from the pier, this bright blue fish shack with white plastic tables and chairs is renowned for its creamy clam chowder (\$4.50 a bowl). The chowder lives up to its advance billing. The menu also includes other seafood fare, such as calamari and curly fries (\$5.75) and a seafood salad (\$6.50), along with burgers, hot dogs, and breakfast sandwiches. The food is inexpensive, and it's a crowd-pleaser. This little eatery is a favorite on

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Yelp.com, where dozens of enthusiastic yelpers keep spreading the word.

Frankie and Lola's (805-771-9306; frankieandlolas.com), 1154 Front St., Morro Bay 93442. Open daily, 6:30 AM–2:30 PM. Inexpensive–moderate. Credit cards are accepted. Located at the intersection of Front St. and the Embarcadero, this hip little diner puts a tasty spin on breakfast. The menu includes “French Toast: Brule, Soufflé, Flambé.” Translation, the toast is soaked in cinnamon crème brûlée, baked in the oven (soufflé), and then finished with a caramelized pecan praline topping (flambé). Yum. There’s also a fried green tomato Benedict on grits. Lunch gets interesting, too: Try the chèvre and baguette (warmed goat cheese with tapenade and oven-dried tomatoes) or the Frankie Burger, served with avocado, an over-medium egg, and an onion ring.

★ **Giovanni's** (805-772-2123; giovannifishmarket.com), 1001 Front St., Morro Bay 93442. Open daily 9 AM–6



ORDERING AT GIOVANNI'S FISH MARKET AND RESTAURANT

PM. Inexpensive. Credit cards are accepted. This humble fish market /restaurant on the Embarcadero has been a favorite local haunt for 25 years. Giovanni's is the place to enjoy fresh fish and a Bloody Mary on the outdoor patio overlooking the Morro

GIOVANNI'S FISH MARKET AND RESTAURANT ON THE WATER IN MORRO BAY



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Bay fishing fleet. The Dungeness crab quesadillas alone are worth the trip. Even better: Nothing on Giovanni's menu costs more than \$10.

Indigo Moon (805-927-2911; indigomooncafe.com), 1940 Main St., Cambria 93428. Open for lunch daily 10 AM–4 PM; dinner Wed.–Sun. 5–9 PM. Moderate–expensive. Credit cards are accepted. Located in Cambria's east village, Indigo Moon is a casual, relaxing spot to nosh. You'll enjoy cheese plates, flavorful soups, salads, and sandwiches, as well as a good selection of wine by the glass, inside the restaurant or on the pleasant outdoor patio. Save room for desserts. They're homemade and include morsels like a cherry and pear crisp served with a drizzle of cream.

Orchid/The Bay Club (805-772-5651; innatmorrobay.com), 60 State Park Rd., Morro Bay 93442. Open for breakfast 7–10 AM; Bay Club noon–9 PM; dinner at Orchid served Wed.–Sun., starting at 5 PM. Moderate–expensive. Credit cards are accepted. Location. Location. Location. That's the best reason to stop for a meal at the tranquil Inn at Morro Bay, where the dining room has a wall of glass windows overlooking the bay and Morro Rock. Executive chef Anthony Reeves's menu in the main dining room, Orchid, features sustainable seafood, Hearst Ranch grass-fed beef, and produce from local growers; there's a three-course nightly tasting menu with wine pairings. At breakfast and lunch the adjacent Bay Club offers simpler fare, such as sandwiches, tapas, and salads. And while you're dining in the middle of a nature sanctuary you'll savor the nonstop show of birds and sea lions in the bay just outside.

Wild Ginger (805-927-1001; wildgingercambria.com), 2380 Main St.,

Cambria 93428. Open for lunch 11 AM–2:30 PM, dinner 5–9 PM; closed Thu. Moderate–expensive. Credit cards are accepted, but not reservations. The chef-owner of Wild Ginger, Singapore transplant Deborah Mok, has brought her native country's Asian fusion cooking to Cambria, where the menu and daily specials draw on the cuisines of Vietnam, Korea, Hunan, Szechuan, India, and, most of all, Thailand. The small restaurant looks especially inviting at night with twin neon palm trees flanking the entrance. Homemade desserts—tarts, cobblers, cheesecakes, and fruit sorbets—are a specialty.

Windows on the Water (805-772-0677; windowsonthewater.net), 699 Embarcadero, Morro Bay 93442. Open Fri., Sat., Sun, 11:30 AM–2:30 PM (summer only); dinner daily 5 PM. Expensive. Credit cards are accepted. Reservations suggested. Windows on the Bay is an airy, romantic restaurant right on the water in Morro Bay. This hot spot serves sophisticated fare sure to delight foodies and wine lovers. The menu is modern California cuisine prepared in an open kitchen, and the menu mirrors the produce and fresh catches of the season. Each night there are new offerings on the seafood bar, such as prawn martinis and oysters on the half shell, and the restaurant's chefs create Brie and caramelized onion flatbread and a changing menu of pizzas in a wood-burning oven. Sun.–Thu. Windows on the Water features a three-course chef's prix fixe menu for \$30 per person.

FOOD PURVEYORS Avila Valley Barn (805-595-2810, 805-595-2816; avilavalleybarn.com), 550 Avila Beach Dr., San Luis Obispo 93405. Stop by for fresh vegetables, fruits, pies, and an assortment of baked goods to go.

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Joe Momma's (805-627-1500; joe mommasbeachstay.com), 310 Front St., Avila Beach 93424. A coffee shop right across from the shore in Avila Beach.

Linn's (805-927-0371; linnsofcambria.com), 2277 Main St., Cambria 93428. Linn's is a local favorite for olallieberry pie à la mode and other baked goods.

Tea Cozy (805-927-876; teacozy.com), 4286 Bridge St., Cambria 93428. This small house off Cambria's main drag serves high tea and scones.

Two Dogs' Coffee Co. (805-772-2633; 2dofscoffee.com), 1612 Main St., Morro Bay 93442. Get your java fix and check your e-mail here.

* Selective Shopping

Bargain hunters will like the factory outlet center in Pismo Beach. **Prime Outlets** (805-773-4661; primeoutlets.com), 333 Five Cities Dr., Pismo Beach, offers Polo Ralph, Lauren, Nike Factory, Calvin Klein, Aeropostale, and other outlet stores. You'll see the center right off Hwy. 101.

The beach towns offer more interesting handcrafted shopping options. In Cambria you want to browse in the artsy town's many galleries, among them the **Seekers Art Glass Gallery** (805-927-4352; seekersglass.com), 4090 Burton Dr., which stocks the work of glass artists; and **Moonstones American Craft Gallery** (805-927-

AT THE SHELL SHOP IN MORRO BAY



3447; moonstones.com), 4070 Burton Dr., which sells jewelry, intricate hardwood jewelry boxes, sculpture, peaceful fountains, and colorful kaleidoscopes. There are numerous antiques emporiums, including **Antiques on Main** (805-927-4292), 2338 Main St.; **Birds of a Feather** (805-927-2391), 2020 Main St.; and the **Cambria Antique Center** (805-927-2353), 2110 Main St. Cambria also has some specialty shops, such as **Exotic Nature** (805-927-8423; exotic-nature.com), 83 Main St., which is crammed with botanical lotions, potions, and aromatherapy products.

In Morro Bay you'll find some gems among the touristy offerings near the Embarcadero. **The Garden Gallery** (805-772-4044; thegarden-gallery.org), 680 Embarcadero, is an eclectic original, a beautiful shop brimming with exotic outdoor sculptures, pottery, and plants. Nearby, kids and adults alike will love browsing the quirky offerings of the **Shell Shop** (805-772-8014), 590 Embarcadero, which stocks sea treasures from around the world.

FARMER'S MARKETS The SLO beach towns host weekly open-air markets (northcountyfarmersmarkets.com); some include seafood right off the boats.

Avila Beach: Fri. 4–8 PM on the Promenade on Front St., Apr.–Sept. (805-602-8266).

Baywood/Los Osos: Mon. 2–4:30 PM, at 2nd and Santa Maria Sts. by the bay.

Cambria: Fri. 2:30–5 PM on Main St. next to Veterans Memorial Hall.

Cayucos: Fri. 9:30 AM–noon during summer outside the Vet's Hall, 10 Cayucos Dr.

Morro Bay: Sat. 3–6 PM. Fishermen and farmer's market at Main St. and Morro Bay Blvd.

Shell Beach: Sat. 9 AM–1 PM. Farmer's market with produce, flowers, jams, and other items at Dinosaur Caves Park (at Cliff St. and Shell Beach Rd.).

* Special Events

January: Morro Bay Winter Bird Festival (morrobaybirdfestival.org)—four-day celebration of birds and bird-watching. **Cambria Art and Wine Festival** (805-927-3624; cambriartwine.org).

January–February: Monarch Butterfly Grove tours (monarchbutterfly.org) in Pismo Beach, site of the annual migration.

February: Big, Bad & Ugly Surf Contest (surflines.com) at Morro Rock.

March: Central Coast Orchid Show and Sale (805-929-5749; fcos.org), 800 Branch St., Arroyo Grande.

April: Cambria's Annual Chili Cook-Off and Car Show (cambria-chamber.org/events.php).

May: Avila Beach Blues Festival (otterproductionsinc.com) at the Avila Beach Resort.

June: Morro Bay Music Festival (mbmusicfest.com)—a free waterfront event at the Embarcadero. **Pismo Beach June Car Show** (866-450-7469; thepismobeachclassic), featuring more than 800 classic cars and street rods.

July: Rock to Pier Run (805-772-6278; morro-bay.net). Six miles on the sand from Morro Rock to Cayucos Pier.

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October: **City To The Sea Half-
Marathon & 5K** (805-546-3100, ext.
2507)—from downtown San Luis
Obispo to Shell Beach Rd. to Pismo
Beach's Dinosaur Caves Park. **Annual
Clam Festival** (pismochamber.org) in

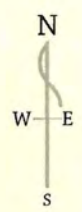
Pismo Beach—carnival, clam dig,
music, and Famous Clam Chowder
Cook-Off. **Morro Bay Harbor Fes-
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seafood fair with live music.



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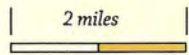
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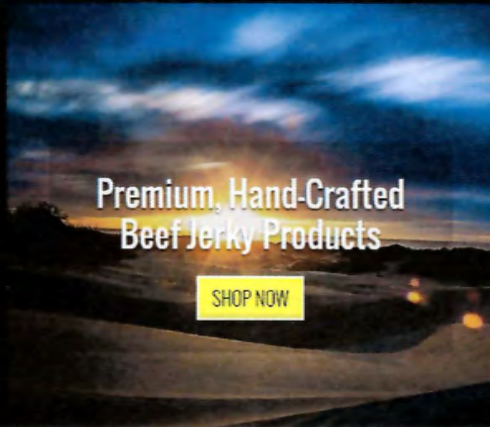
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SLO Coast Jerky, LLC

191 S. Oak Park Boulevard, Suite 5

Grover Beach, CA 93433

805-904-6020

805-904-6021 (FAX)

SLO Coast Jerky (Store email) slocoastjerky1@gmail.com

Steve Geis (Owner) steveandlloyd@yahoo.com 805-234-4919

Neil "Larry" Geis (VP Sales) nlngeis@msn.com 805-794-3332

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The Slo Coast Journal

Great Blue Heron
(Ardea herodias)

The Central Coast's #1 Local Lifestyle & Information Magazine

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Recent Postings

November, 2015

[Last letter to Roxie by Betty Finocchiaro](#)

January, 2016

[Proud Cat by George Asdel](#)

[The Magical Bean Pot by Ruth Cowne](#)

Return of the Journal

In August, 2015, the Journal came back online at our new Web address, slocoastjournal.net. We thank our readers for their patience and loyalty.

The Journal has a new format. We no longer publish monthly issues. New work by our columnists' will be published as submitted, and the most recent postings will be listed here on the Journal's home page.

Each columnist has personal pages with links to all of that person's work that has been published in the Journal over the years.

The Journal no longer publishes news articles.



Photo by Gene Elsdon

Welcome to the Slo Coast Journal, "Judy's Place". The Journal brings you information about California's Central Coast and surrounding area.

The Journal is dedicated to its creator, [Judy Sullivan](#), for whom it was a labor of love from July, 2009 to January 2015. Her love of the Central Coast, its natural wonders, and its people, has been obvious in every issue of the Journal.

She inspired and encouraged the Journal's talented writers and artists to share their talents and together with them, created something unique and wonderful.



In Memorium

Sadly, we must report that the Journal and its readers lost our star reporter, Jack McCurdy, in March, 2016.

An article about Jack appears in the May 19, 2016 issue of the Bay News. Jack's work can be viewed in the Archives on this site.

We had previously lost three wonderful people in late 2015.

Judy Sullivan was creator and editor of the Journal.

Betty Finocchiaro was one of the founders of the Atascadero Writers Group, and wrote the Journal's popular "letter to Roxie" series.

George Zidbeck, whom many Journal readers know as the "Country Squire" shared his wisdom and wit with Journal readers for many years.

They will be greatly missed.

The Great Blue Heron Image on Banner by Nan Carder. All Content Copyright Slo Coast Journal and Individual Writers



BILL MONNING FOR SENATE

17th Senate District, California

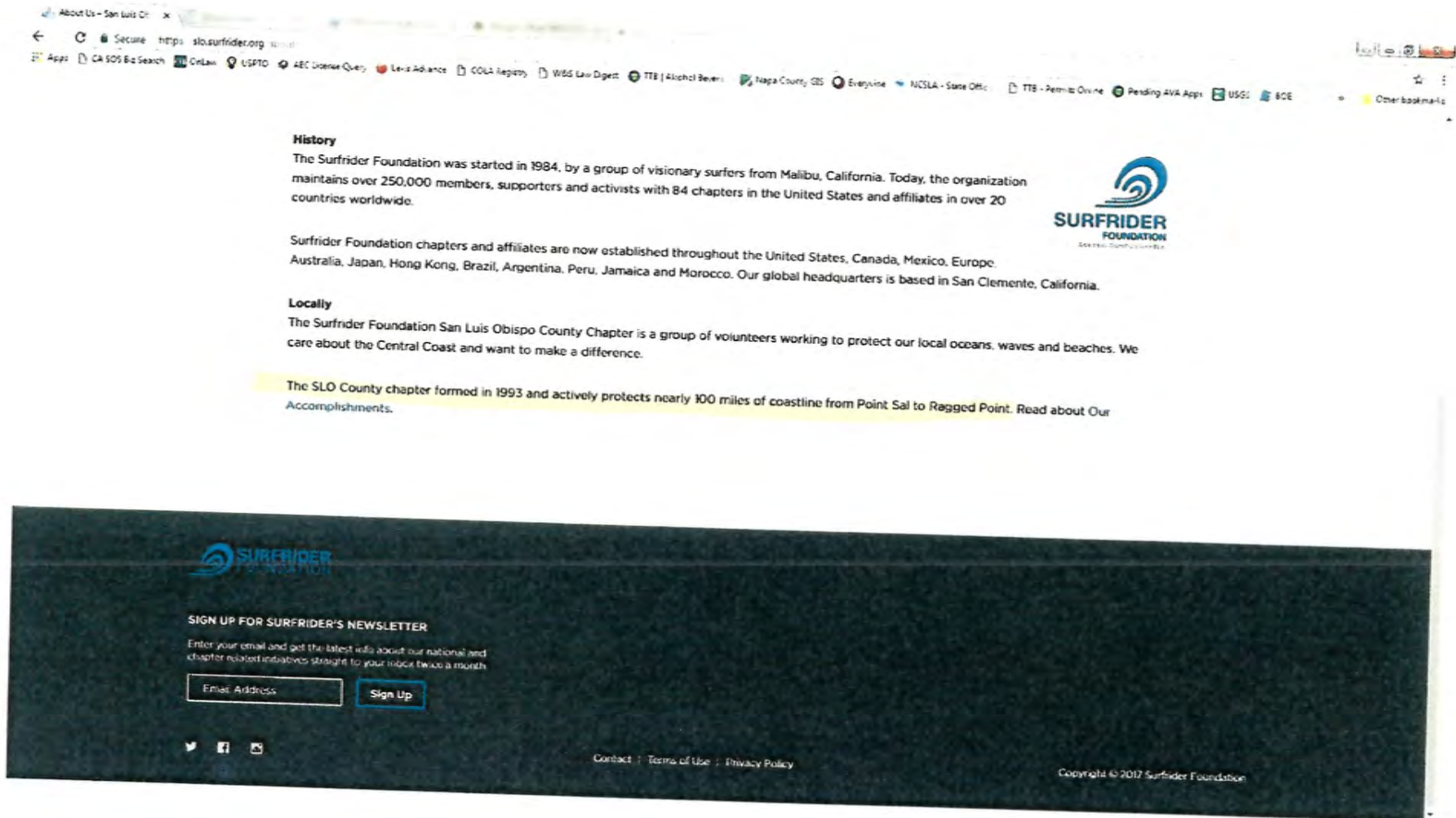
Basin State Park.

The new Senate district is linked by **two great California roads** running north-south. **Highway 101** streams through the bustling corridor of **South San Jose, Morgan Hill, San Martin, and Gilroy**; in a different Senate district down through the Salinas Valley, the road picks up the 17th Senate district again as it cuts through the golden hills of North SLO County's ranch and wine country, past **Paso Robles** and **Atascadero** before plunging down the grade to **San Luis Obispo** and the **SLO Coast** towns of **Pismo Beach, Grover Beach, and Arroyo Grande**.

Highway 1 travels the length of the district, right along the Pacific edge from the narrow agricultural plateau between the mountains and the rugged coastline of **Santa Cruz County's North Coast**; skirting around the **Monterey Bay**, linking **Santa Cruz, Capitola, Watsonville, Castroville, Moss Landing, Marina, Seaside, Monterey, Pacific Grove, and Carmel**; then winding along the fabled **Big Sur** coast until the hills below **Cambria** are finally low enough for roads inland to Paso and Atascadero, finally rolling calmly through Morro Bay to join 101 in SLO.

Of course, what the Senate district is really about is the **hardworking people and diverse communities** that share this beautiful part of California. **Bill Monning**, who **until last year represented about half of the district** in the State Assembly, liked the new district so much he decided to skip a fairly assured third Assembly term for a chance to represent the larger area of the Senate district. After **winning by a large margin in November 2012**, Monning said,

"I'm thrilled to represent this Senate district. Together this region has the capability -- the people, the farms and ranches, educational institutions, businesses small and large, dedicated community leaders and elected officials -- everything to **lead California to a prosperous and sustainable future.**"



July 18, 2016

Director Amy Greenberg, Regulations and Rulings Division
Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau
1310 G Street NW, Box 12
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Director Greenberg:

The purpose of this letter is to support the petition to create a San Luis Obispo Coast American Viticultural Area (AVA).

The SLO Wine Country Association is the vintners association charged with marketing the coastal wine growing region of San Luis Obispo County. The organization was founded in 1990 as the Edna Valley/Arroyo Grande Valley Vintners Association in recognition of the proximity and similarity of the Edna Valley and Arroyo Grande Valley in coastal San Luis Obispo County. These two small AVAs share a boundary line and significant coastal climatic influence.

Over time, wine growing expanded outside of the Edna and Arroyo Grande Valleys and our organization recognized the need to expand the definition of its territory to include the entire area to the west of the San Lucia Mountains in San Luis Obispo County. This is the area that is now proposed to be established as the San Luis Obispo Coast AVA. In 2011, the decision was made to rename the organization the "SLO Wine Country Association" in recognition of greater consumer awareness of the name San Luis Obispo and the recognition that this more accurately describes the area where the grapes are grown.

There is strong consensus among the member wineries of the SLO Wine Country Association that the San Luis Obispo Coast AVA would enhance recognition of the region, and clear up consumer confusion regarding the origin of grapes and wines from our area. Wines from the San Luis Obispo Coast area have historically been marketed as a group united by the distinct coastal climate of the region. I encourage you to approve the petition to create the San Luis Obispo Coast AVA.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Brian Talley
President, SLO Wine Country Association

OPERATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Operating a motor vehicle on National Forest System roads, National Forest System trails, and areas on National Forest System lands carries a greater responsibility than operating that vehicle in a city or other developed setting. Not only must you know and follow all applicable traffic laws, you need to allow concern for the environment as well as other forest users. This means you must follow all vehicles on trails, temporary or permanent closure of any designated road, trail, or area. As a motor vehicle operator, you are also subject to State traffic laws, including State requirements for license, registration, and operation of the vehicle in question.

Motor vehicle use, especially off-highway vehicle use, involves inherent risks that may cause property damage, serious injury, and possibly death to participants. Drive cautiously and anticipate rough surfaces and features, such as snow, mud, vegetation, and water crossings common to remote driving conditions. By your participation, you voluntarily assume full responsibility for these damages, risks, and dangers. Take care at all times to protect yourself and those under your responsibility.

Much of the Los Padres National Forest is remote. Medical assistance may not be readily available. Cellular telephones do not work in many areas of the Los Padres National Forest. Take adequate food, water, first-aid supplies, and other equipment appropriate for the conditions and expected weather.

ALWAYS REMEMBER TO RESPECT PRIVATE LAND! PROTECT YOUR PRIVATE SIDE. STAY ON DESIGNATED ROADS AND TRAILS AND IN DESIGNATED AREAS.

Read and understand the map in its entirety. If you have questions, please contact the Los Padres National Forest for clarification.

As a motor vehicle operator on a National Forest System road, trail, or area, you must comply with the laws, as well as all Federal, State, and local laws and regulations. Compliance with these laws is your responsibility.

PROHIBITIONS

It is prohibited to possess or operate a motor vehicle on National Forest System lands on the Los Padres National Forest other than in accordance with these designations (36 CFR 261.13).

Violators of 36 CFR 261.13 are subject to a fine of up to \$5,000, imprisonment for up to 6 months, or both (18 U.S.C. 3571(a)). This prohibition applies regardless of the presence or absence of signs.

This map does not display nonmotorized uses, over-snow uses, or other facilities and attractions on the Los Padres National Forest. Obtain latest visitor information from the local national forest office.

Designated roads, trails, and areas may also be subject to temporary, emergency closures. As a visitor, you must comply with signs notifying you of such restrictions. A national forest may close an area to a road, trail, or area on a temporary basis to protect the life, health or safety of forest visitors or the natural or cultural resources in those areas. Such temporary and/or emergency closures are consistent with the Travel Management Rule (36 CFR 212.52 (b), 35 CFR 201 subpart D).

The designation "road or trail open to all motor vehicles" does not supersede State traffic law.

PROHIBITIONS

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The designation "road or trail open to all motor vehicles" does not supersede State traffic law.

Motor Vehicle Use Map

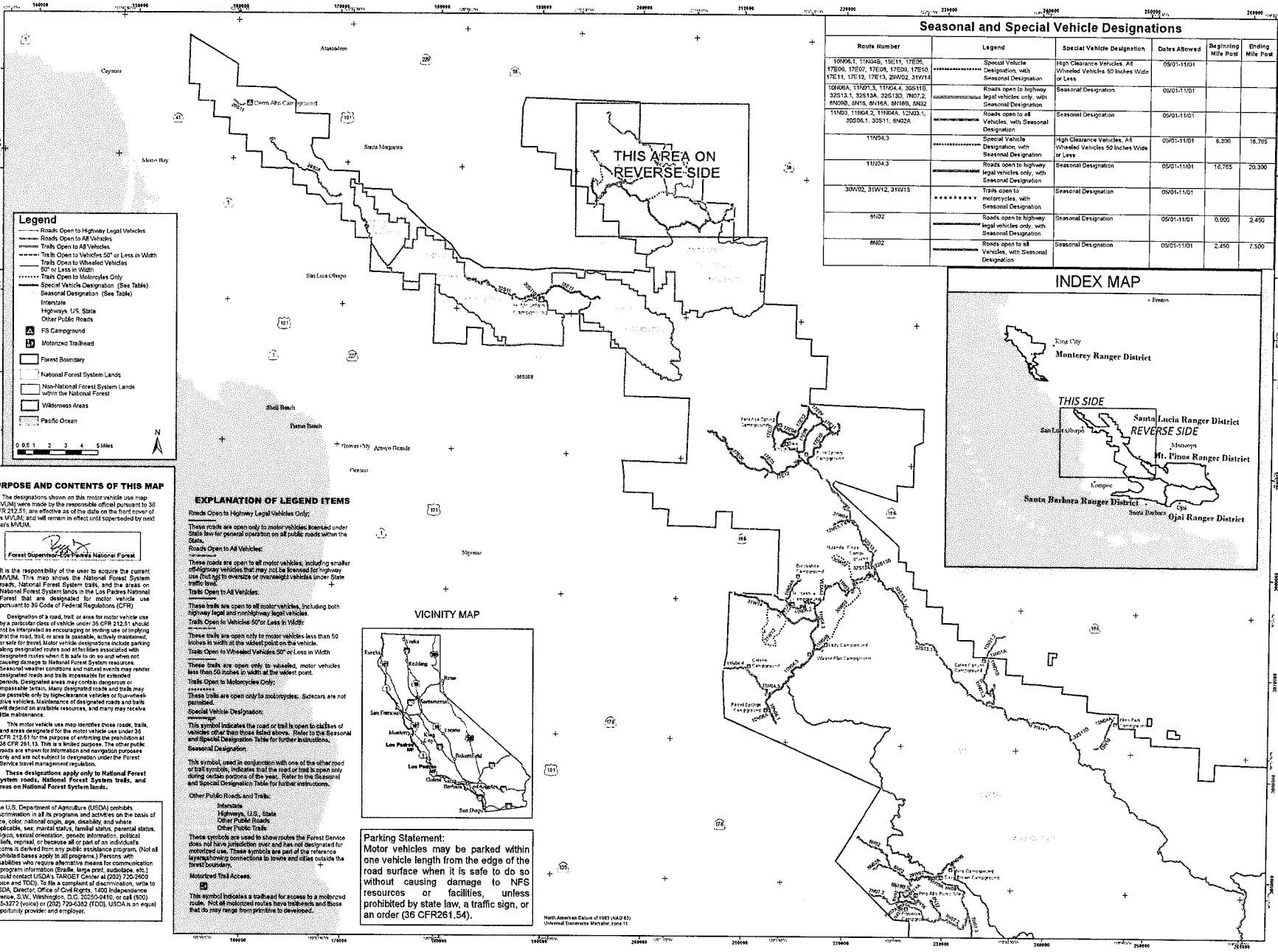
Los Padres National Forest

Santa Lucia Ranger District

California Forest Service

United States Department of Agriculture

- INFORMATION SOURCES**
- Supervisor's Office
6765 Hollister Avenue, Suite 150, Colton, CA 95317
Voice: (925) 369-6540
TTY/TDD: (925) 368-2790
Newsline: (925) 951-2770
 - Monterey Ranger District
400 South Mission, Ripon, CA 95320
Voice: (510) 385-5434
TTY/TDD: (510) 385-1185
 - Santa Lucia Ranger District
1616 Carthill Drive, Santa Maria, CA 93454
Voice: (805) 925-9536
TTY/TDD: (805) 925-5246
 - Santa Barbara Ranger District
3505 Paradise Road, Santa Barbara, CA 93105
Voice: (805) 997-3481
TTY/TDD: (805) 997-7317
 - Ojai Ranger District
1100 East Ojai Avenue, Ojai, CA 93023
Voice: (805) 644-2344
TTY/TDD: (805) 644-2355
 - Mt. Pinos Ranger District
34560 Lockwood Valley Road, Piner Park, CA 93225
Voice: (895) 245-5211
TTY/TDD: (895) 245-5211



Legend

- Roads Open to Highway Legal Vehicles
- Roads Open to All Vehicles
- Trails Open to All Vehicles
- Trails Open to Vehicles 50" or Less in Width
- Trails Open to Motorized Vehicles 50" or Less in Width
- Trails Open to Motorcycles Only
- Special Vehicle Designation (See Table)

Intentional:

- Highways, U.S. State
- Other Public Roads
- FS Campground
- Motorized Trailhead

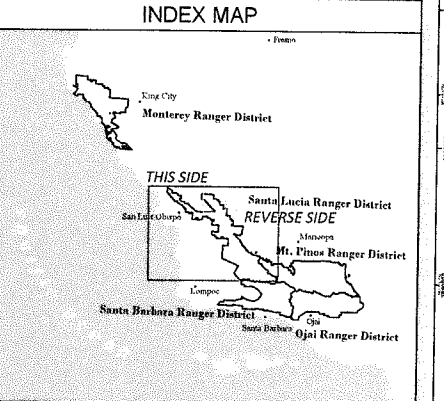
Other:

- Forest Boundary
- National Forest System Lands
- Non-National Forest System Lands
- Wilderness Areas
- Pacific Ocean

Scale: 0 0.5 1 2 3 4 5 Miles

Seasonal and Special Vehicle Designations

Route Number	Legend	Special Vehicle Designation	Dates Allowed	Beginning Mile Post	Ending Mile Post
1100K1, 1100M5, 19E11, 17E09, 17E08, 17E07, 17E06, 17E05, 17E13, 17E12, 17E11, 17E10, 25W02, 31W14	Special Vehicle Designation, with Seasonal Designation	High Clearance Vehicles, All Wheeled Vehicles 50 Inches Wide or Less	09/01-11/01		
1100K2, 1100K3, 1100K4, 30E11E, 32S13-1, 32S13A, 32S13D, 70E7.2, 82N02, 84N5, 84N6A, 84N6B, 84N2	Roads open to highway legal vehicles only, with Seasonal Designation	Seasonal Designation	09/01-11/01		
1100K1, 1100K2, 1100M4, 1200K1, 30E06A, 30E11, 82N2A	Roads open to all Vehicles, with Seasonal Designation	Seasonal Designation	09/01-11/01		
11N04.3	Special Vehicle Designation, with Seasonal Designation	High Clearance Vehicles, All Wheeled Vehicles 50 Inches Wide or Less	09/01-11/01	8.300	16.700
11N04.3	Roads open to highway legal vehicles only, with Seasonal Designation	Seasonal Designation	09/01-11/01	16.755	20.300
30W02, 31W12, 31W13	Trails open to motorcycles, with Seasonal Designation	Seasonal Designation	09/01-11/01		
84N2	Roads open to highway legal vehicles only, with Seasonal Designation	Seasonal Designation	09/01-11/01	0.000	2.450
84N2	Roads open to all Vehicles, with Seasonal Designation	Seasonal Designation	09/01-11/01	2.450	7.500



PURPOSE AND CONTENTS OF THIS MAP

The designations shown on this motor vehicle use map (MVM) were made by the responsible official pursuant to 36 CFR 212.51. They are effective as of the date on the first cover of this MVM, and will remain in effect until superseded by next year's MVM.

Forest Supervisor, Los Padres National Forest

It is the responsibility of the user to activate the current MVM. This map shows the National Forest System roads, National Forest System trails, and the areas on National Forest System lands in the Los Padres National Forest that are designated for motor vehicle use pursuant to 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR).

Designation of a road, trail, or area for motor vehicle use by a particular class of vehicle under 36 CFR 212.51 should not be interpreted as encouraging or inviting use or implying that the road, trail, or area is passable, actively maintained, or safe for travel under the designated use. Designated roads and trails may be closed or restricted at any time due to fire, weather, or other conditions. Seasonal weather conditions and natural events may render designated roads and trails impassable for extended periods. Designated areas may contain dangerous or impassable terrain. Many designated roads and trails may be passable only by high-clearance vehicles or four-wheeled vehicles. Maintenance of designated roads and trails will depend on available resources, and they may receive little maintenance.

This motor vehicle use map identifies those roads, trails, and areas designated for the motor vehicle use under 36 CFR 212.51 for the purpose of enforcing the prohibition at 36 CFR 261.13. This is a limited purpose. The other public roads are shown for information and navigation purposes only and are not subject to designation under the Forest Service travel management regulation.

These designations apply only to National Forest System roads, National Forest System trails, and areas on National Forest System lands.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, and where applicable, age, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political affiliation, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibitions apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's Disability Center at (202) 720-2620 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1420 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 785-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

EXPLANATION OF LEGEND ITEMS

Roads Open to Highway Legal Vehicles Only:

These roads are open only to motor vehicles licensed under State law for general operation on all public roads within the State.

Roads Open to All Vehicles:

These roads are open to all motor vehicles, including both highway legal and nonhighway legal vehicles.

Trails Open to All Vehicles:

These trails are open only to motor vehicles less than 50 inches in width at the widest portion on the vehicle.

Trails Open to Vehicles 50" or Less in Width:

These trails are open only to motor vehicles less than 50 inches in width at the widest point.

Trails Open to Motorcycles Only:

These trails are open only to motorcycles. Bicycles are not permitted.

Special Vehicle Designation:

This symbol indicates the road or trail is open to classes of vehicles other than those listed above. Refer to the Seasonal and Special Designation Table for further instructions.

Seasonal Designation:

This symbol, used in conjunction with one of the other road or trail symbols, indicates that the road or trail is open only during certain portions of the year. Refer to the Seasonal and Special Designation Table for further instructions.

Other Public Roads and Trails:

Intentional:
Highways, U.S. State
Other Public Roads

These symbols are used to show routes the Forest Service does not have jurisdiction over and has not designated for motorized use. These symbols are part of the reference map showing connections to towns and cities outside the forest boundary.

Motorized Trail Access:

This symbol indicates a trailhead for access to a motorized road. Not all motorized routes have trailheads and those that do may result from primitive to developed.

VICINITY MAP



Parking Statement:

Motor vehicles may be parked within one vehicle length from the edge of the road surface when it is safe to do so without causing damage to NFS resources or facilities, unless prohibited by state law, a traffic sign, or an order (36 CFR 261.54).



Board of Directors

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Officer*

Nikki Schmidt
County Liaison

January 25, 2017

Director Amy Greenberg, Regulations and Rulings Division
Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau
1310 G Street NW, Box 12
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Director Greenberg:

The purpose of this letter is to support the petition to create a San Luis Obispo Coast American Viticultural Area (AVA). A diverse array of winegrape growers and wineries from throughout the affected region have joined together to support this effort.

Winegrowing in coastal San Luis Obispo County enjoys a long history dating to the 1880s with the establishment of the historic St. Remy Winery in the eastern Arroyo Grande Valley. In more recent times, vineyards were planted in the Edna Valley in the early 1970s and the western Arroyo Grande Valley in the early 1980s. The Edna Valley was recognized as an AVA in 1982 and the Arroyo Grande Valley in 1990.

These two small AVAs share a boundary line and significant coastal climatic influence. Since 1990, the wines from the Edna and Arroyo Grande Valleys have been marketed together by a single vintners' association called the SLO Wine Country Association, in recognition of the greater consumer awareness of the name "San Luis Obispo" (SLO). Unfortunately, since no AVA referencing San Luis Obispo exists, wineries have not been able to use this term on their wine labels.

The proposed San Luis Obispo Coast AVA will lie in the coastal part of San Luis Obispo County, entirely to the west of the Santa Lucia Mountains, stretching from the Monterey County line in the north to the Santa Barbara County line to the south. It will overlay the existing Arroyo Grande and Edna Valley AVAs, and include other parts of coastal San Luis Obispo County where more recent vineyard development has occurred. Climatic studies have shown that this area is distinct from the Paso Robles AVA, located on the eastern side of the Santa Lucias. With a majority of vineyards located less than 8 miles from the ocean, the San Luis Obispo Coast will be one of the coolest and most coastal influenced AVAs in California.

It is the diversity of our county's visitor-serving activities that together create an ideal experience for tourists, this is critical in keeping our coastal communities competitive with surroundings areas like Santa Barbara and Monterey. I encourage you to approve the petition to create the San Luis Obispo Coast AVA.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Laila Fiege-Kollmann, Advisory Board Chair
Unincorporated San Luis Obispo County Tourism Business Improvement District

**Letter**

TO: Director Amy Greenberg
Regulations and Rulings Division
Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade
Bureau
1310 G Street NW. Box 12
Washington, DC 20005

DATE: 8/16/2016

FROM: Dr Benoît LECAT, WVIT DPT HEAD

COPIES: Brian Talley, Katy Stambaugh

SUBJECT: Creation of San Luis Obispo AVA

Dear Director Greenberg,

The purpose of this letter is to support the petition to create a San Luis Obispo Coast American Viticultural Area (AVA). A diverse array of winegrape growers and wineries from throughout the affected region have joined together to support this effort including Cal Poly. Our Department is teaching Wine and Viticulture with a small experimental vineyard called the Trestle Vineyard from which we produce wine. We are working in a cooperative approach with the local producers in order to implement our learn-by-doing philosophy and provide the best workforce for them.

Winegrowing in coastal San Luis Obispo County enjoys a long history dating to the 1880s with the establishment of the historic St. Remy Winery in the eastern Arroyo Grande Valley. In more recent times, vineyards were planted in the Edna Valley in the early 1970s and the western Arroyo Grande Valley in the early 1980s. The Edna Valley was recognized as an AVA in 1982 and the Arroyo Grande Valley in 1990.

These two small AVAs share a boundary line and significant coastal climatic influence. Since 1990, the wines from the Edna and Arroyo Grande Valleys have been marketed together by a single vintners association called the SLO Wine Country Association, in recognition of the greater consumer awareness of the name "San Luis Obispo" (SLO). Unfortunately, since no AVA referencing San Luis Obispo exists, wineries have not been able to use this term on their wine labels.

The proposed San Luis Obispo Coast AVA will lie in the coastal part of San Luis Obispo County, entirely to the west of the Santa Lucia Mountains, stretching from the Monterey County line in the north to the Santa Barbara County line to the south. It will overlay the existing Arroyo Grande and Edna Valley AVAs, and also include other parts of coastal San Luis Obispo County where more recent vineyard development has occurred. Climatic studies have shown that this area is distinct from the Paso Robles AVA, located on the eastern side of the Santa Lucia. With the majority of

vineyards located less than 8 miles from the ocean, the San Luis Obispo Coast will be one of the coolest and most coastal influenced AVAs in California.

There is strong consensus among the winegrape growers and wineries of coastal San Luis Obispo County that the San Luis Obispo Coast AVA will enhance recognition of the region, and clear up consumer confusion regarding the origin of grapes and wines from the area. Wines from the San Luis Obispo Coast area have historically been marketed as a group united by the distinct coastal climate of the region. I encourage you to approve the petition to create the San Luis Obispo Coast AVA.

Yours respectfully,

(b) (6)



Benoit Lecat, PhD
Wine and Viticulture Department Head
College of Agriculture, Food & Environmental Sciences
California Polytechnic State University
1 Grand Ave, Building 11
San Luis Obispo
CA 93407-0861, USA
E-mail: blecat@calpoly.edu
Phone: +1 (805) 756-2415

STATE CAPITOL
P.O. BOX 942849
SACRAMENTO, CA 94249-0035
(916) 319-2035
FAX (916) 319-2135

DISTRICT OFFICE
300 OSOS STREET SUITE 207
SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA 93401
(805) 549-3381
FAX (805) 549-3400

Assembly California Legislature



KATCHO ACHADJIAN
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, THIRTY-FIFTH DISTRICT

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VICE CHAIR: ACCOUNTABILITY
AND ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW
BANKING AND FINANCE
GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION
TRANSPORTATION

JOINT COMMITTEES
LEGISLATIVE AUDIT

July 19, 2016

Director Amy Greenberg, Regulations and Rulings Division
Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau
1310 G Street NW, Box 12
Washington, DC 20005-3007

Dear Director Greenberg,

As the State Assemblyman for California's 35th District I write to urge your support for the creation of the San Luis Obispo Coast American Viticultural Area (AVA). I have lived in the city of San Luis Obispo since 1971 and have extensive knowledge and experience throughout the County having served 12 years as a County Supervisor. I believe the creation of this AVA is a brilliant strategic thrust that marries a number of positive ongoing efforts to effectively influence the quality of perceptions and decisions about wine buying throughout the industry.

This proposed designation would be congruent with robust marketing outreach that currently finds success and which takes advantage of the national and international recognition of the name San Luis Obispo County. The allied promotion of the San Luis Obispo Coast AVA with countywide promotion efforts should provide powerful marketing leverage and favorably matches the agreed interests of myriad wineries and trade groups.

The proposed AVA recognizes a distinctive difference as the great majority of vineyards in the proposed designation are located less than 8 miles from the Pacific Ocean. The resulting streamlining effected by a more regional designation will reduce the current fragmentation of efforts and promote a much more unified regional identity.

I respectfully request your favorable consideration for the creation of the San Luis Obispo Coast American Viticultural Area.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Khatchik H. "Katcho" Achadjian
35th Assembly District



December 5, 2016

Director Amy Greenberg, Regulations and Rulings Division
Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau
1310 G Street NW, Box 12
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Director Greenberg:

This letter is in support of the petition to create a San Luis Obispo Coast American Viticultural Area (AVA). A diverse array of winegrape growers and wineries from throughout the affected region have joined together to support this effort.

Winegrowing in coastal San Luis Obispo County enjoys a long history dating to the 1880s with the establishment of the historic St. Remy Winery in the eastern Arroyo Grande Valley. In more recent times, vineyards were planted in the Edna Valley in the early 1970s and the western Arroyo Grande Valley in the early 1980s. The Edna Valley was recognized as an AVA in 1982 and the Arroyo Grande Valley in 1990.

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Visit San Luis Obispo County also recognizes the benefit this AVA could have on the tourism industry including:

1. The potential that all the wine produced in Coastal San Luis Obispo County will prominently feature San Luis Obispo Coast on their labels allows these bottles to become ambassadors of sort for San Luis Obispo County bringing recognition and awareness to our region and the destination experience available here.
2. It will streamline the messaging about San Luis Obispo County's wine regions, defining it as two distinct wine regions: Paso Robles and San Luis Obispo Coast.
3. It will enhance the reputation of our coastal wine region generating additional exposure for our area.

There is strong consensus among the winegrape growers and wineries of coastal San Luis Obispo County that the San Luis Obispo Coast AVA enhances recognition of the region clearing up consumer confusion regarding the origin of grapes and wines from the area. I encourage you to approve the petition to create the San Luis Obispo Coast AVA.

All the Best,

(b) (6)

Chuck Davison
President & CEO

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

1055 MONTEREY, ROOM D430 • SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIFORNIA 93408-1003 • 805.781.5450



November 23, 2016

ADAM HILL
SUPERVISOR DISTRICT THREE

Director Amy Greenberg, Regulations and Rulings Division
Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau
1310 G Street NW. Box 12
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Director Greenberg:

As the Third District Supervisor, I have in my District the largest concentration of winegrapes in Coastal San Luis Obispo County. The purpose of this letter is to support the petition to create the San Luis Obispo Coast American Viticultural Area (AVA). I would like to join the diverse array of winegrape growers and wineries from throughout the affected region that have joined together to support this effort.

Winegrowing in coastal San Luis Obispo County enjoys a long history dating to the 1880s with the establishment of the historic St. Remy Winery in the eastern Arroyo Grande Valley. In more recent times, vineyards were planted in the Edna Valley in the early 1970s and the western Arroyo Grande Valley in the early 1980s. The Edna Valley was recognized as an AVA in 1982 and the Arroyo Grande Valley in 1990.

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The proposed San Luis Obispo Coast AVA will lie in the coastal part of San Luis Obispo County, entirely to the west of the Santa Lucia Mountains, stretching from the Monterey County line in the north to the Santa Barbara County line to the south. It will overlay the existing Arroyo Grande and Edna Valley AVAs, and also include other parts of coastal San Luis Obispo County where more recent vineyard development has occurred. Climatic studies have shown that this area is distinct from the Paso Robles AVA, located on the eastern side of the Santa Lucias. With the majority of vineyards located less than 8 miles from the ocean, the San Luis Obispo Coast will be one of the coolest and most coastal influenced AVAs in California.

There is strong consensus among the winegrape growers and wineries of coastal San Luis Obispo County that the San Luis Obispo Coast AVA will enhance recognition of the region,

clear up consumer confusion regarding the origin of grapes and wines from the area, and encourage economic development. Wines from the San Luis Obispo Coast area have historically been marketed as a group united by the distinct coastal climate of the region. I encourage you to approve the petition to create the San Luis Obispo Coast AVA.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

ADAM HILL
Supervisor District 3
San Luis Obispo



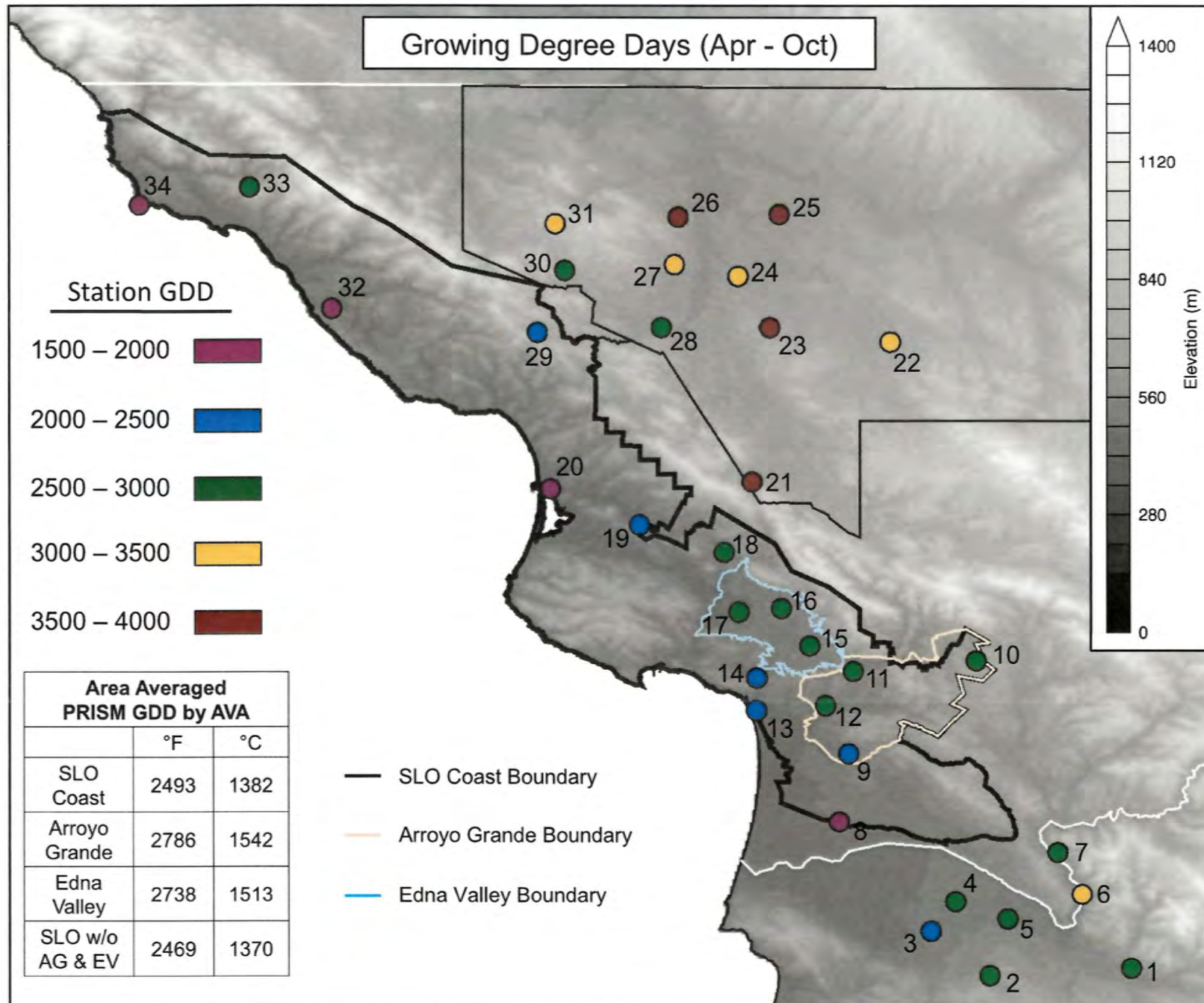
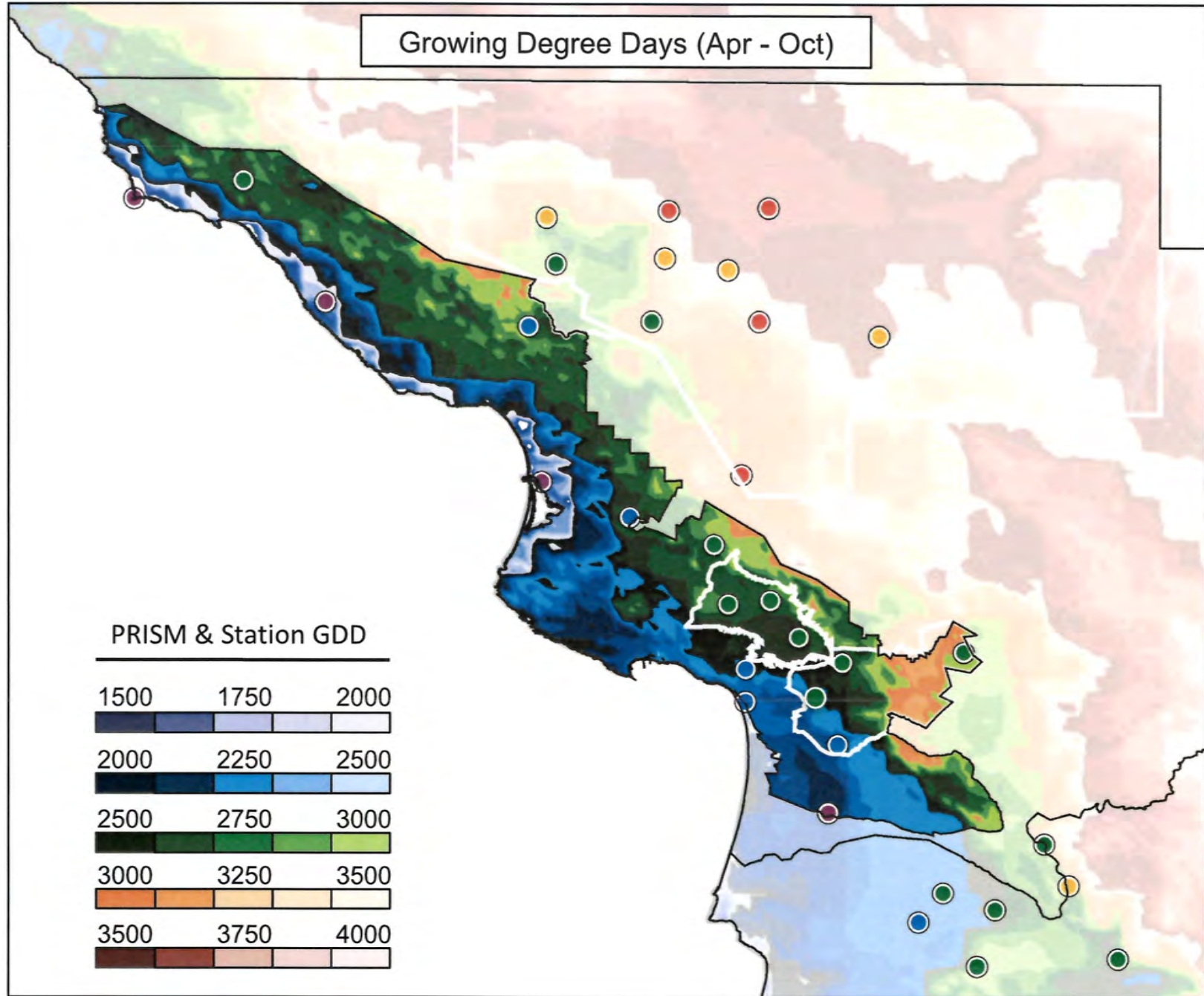
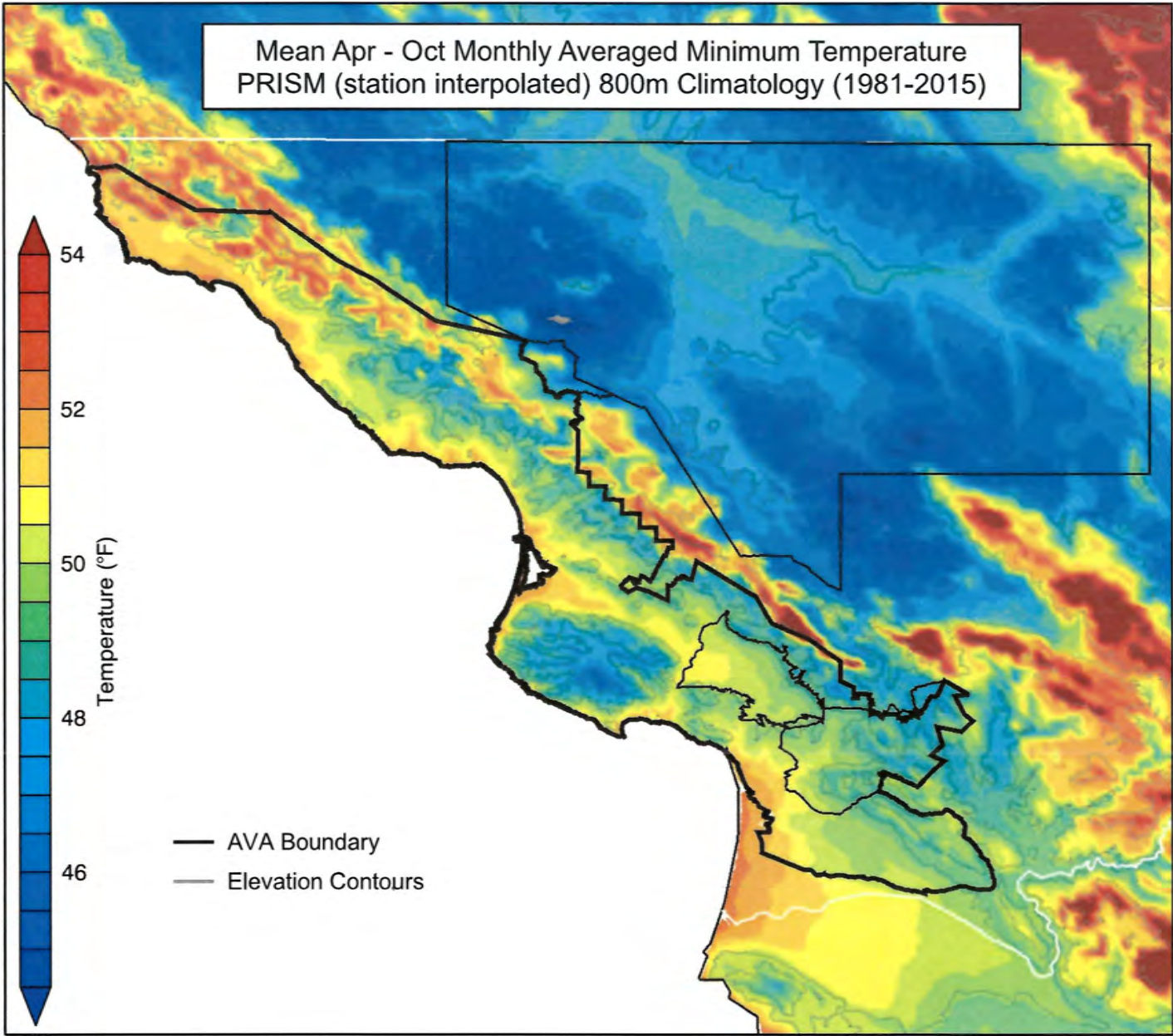
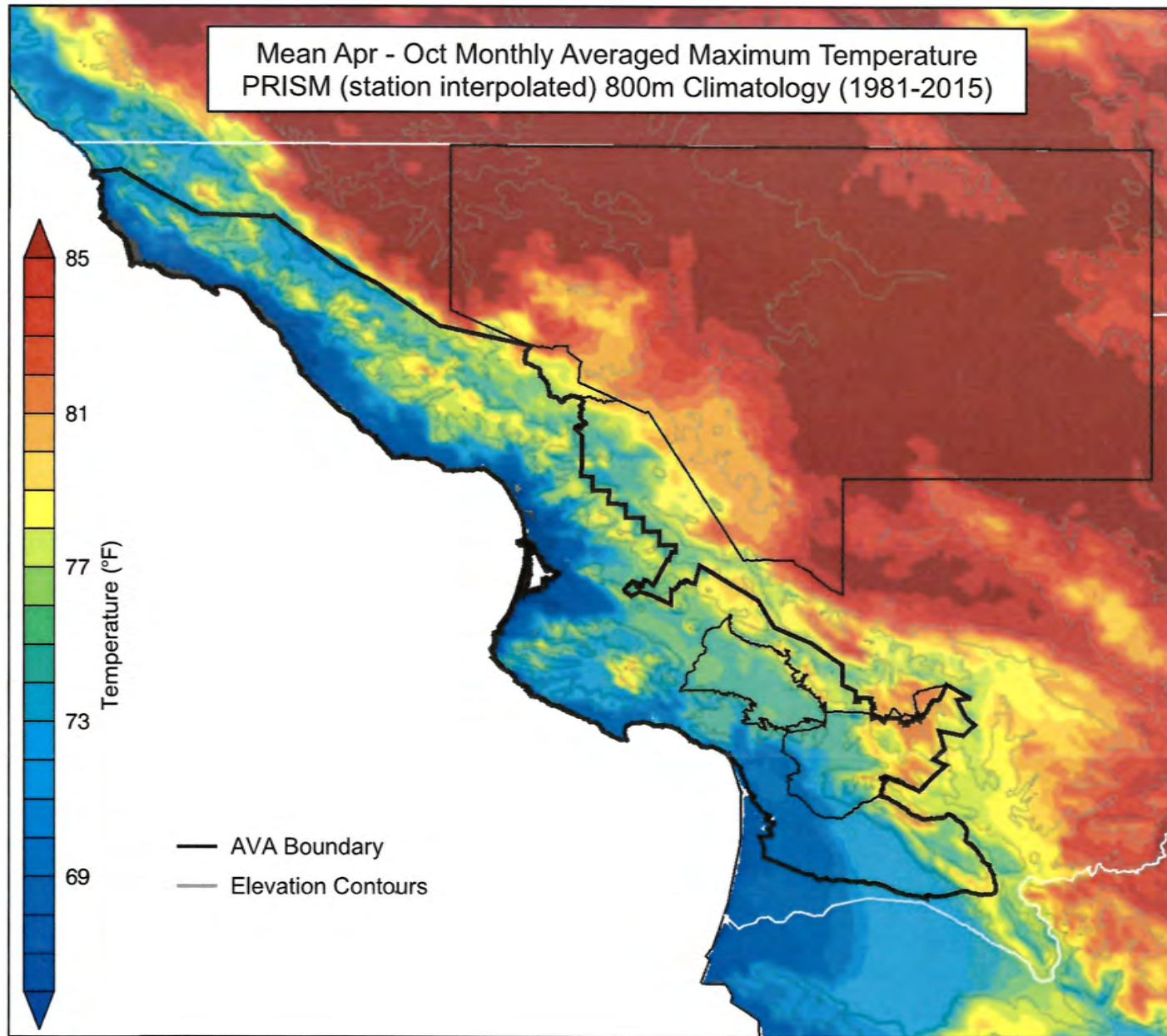


Table 1

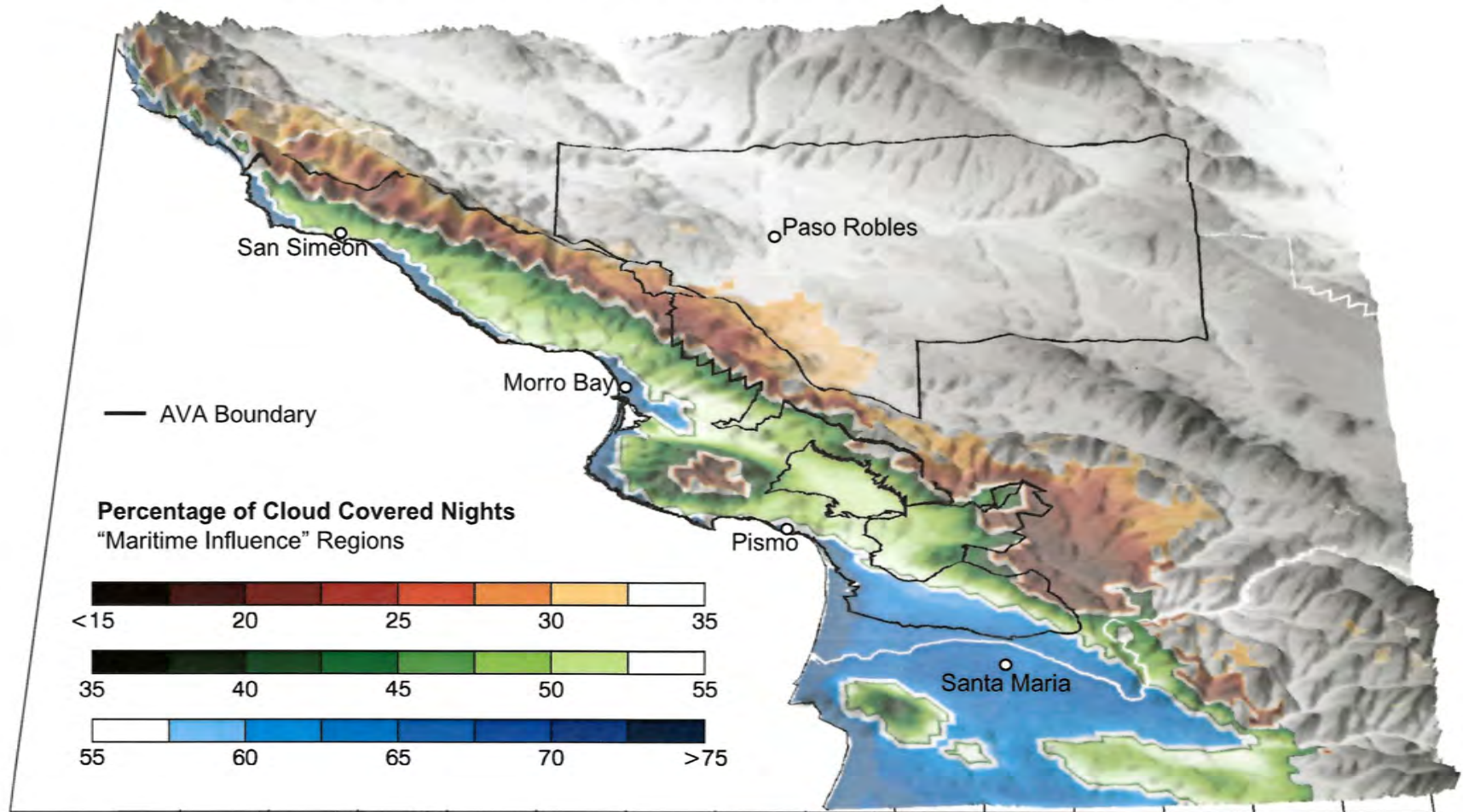
ID#	Network	Range	Tmin	Tmax	GDD
1	UCCE	2008-2011	49.5	76.2	2749
2	UCCE	2008-2011	50.7	73.6	2604
3	NWS	1979-2015	50.5	72.3	2455
4	UCCE	2008-2011	50.5	73.8	2594
5	UCCE	2008-2011	50.8	74.6	2729
6	UCCE	2008-2011	48.9	79.7	3068
7	NWS	1979-2015	49.5	77.8	2915
8	UCCE	2008-2011	49.4	67.6	1818
9	UCCE	2008-2011	50.5	70.6	2256
10	UCCE	2008-2011	47.1	80.1	2912
11	UCCE	2008-2011	51	74.7	2672
12	RAWS	2008-2015	49.5	69.7	2547
13	NWS	1979-2015	51.4	69.6	2254
14	UCCE	2008-2011	48.9	73.9	2441
15	UCCE	2008-2011	48.3	76.6	2660
16	UCCE	2008-2011	51.2	76	2914
17	NWS	1998-2015	51.2	75.5	2867
18	NWS	1979-2015	51	76.3	2963
19	UCCE	2008-2011	49.1	70.8	2132
20	NWS	1979-2015	51.1	67.1	1905
21	NWS	2011-2015	50.2	84.7	3918
22	UCCE	2008-2011	47.4	84.6	3427
23	UCCE	2008-2011	45.9	87.8	3607
24	UCCE	2008-2011	47.5	83.6	3321
25	UCCE	2008-2011	48.8	84.5	3567
26	UCCE	2008-2011	50.1	87.4	4020
27	UCCE	2008-2011	47.3	80.9	3019
28	UCCE	2008-2011	45.8	80.4	2817
29	UCCE	2008-2011	47.3	74.5	2349
30	UCCE	2008-2011	45.3	81	2819
31	UCCE	2008-2011	49	83.3	3462
32	RAWS	2008-2015	51.5	69.1	1957
33	NWS	1999-2015	55	73.4	3136
34	NWS	1998-2005	51.6	58.8	1152

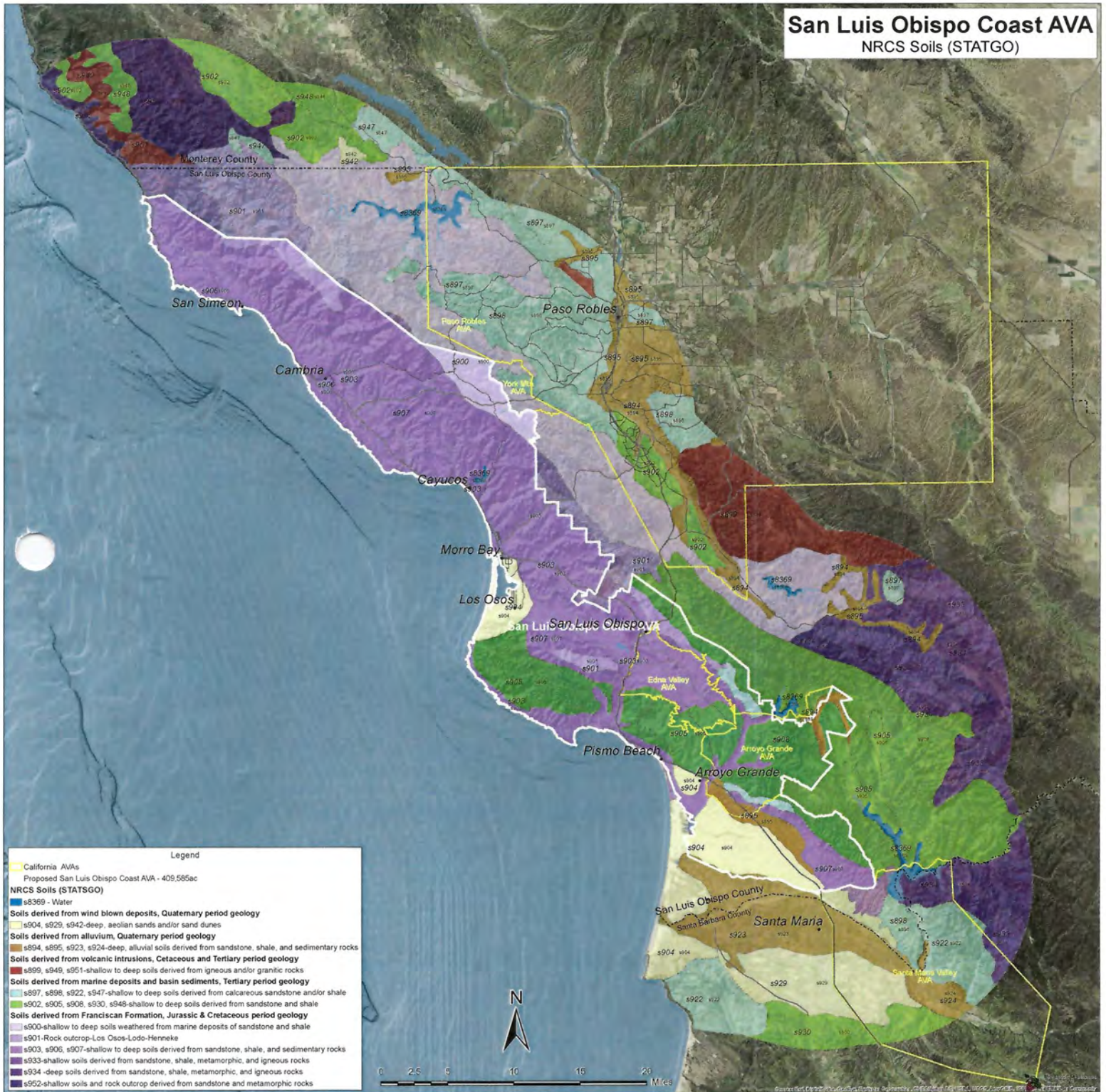






Percent of Nighttime Retrievals with Cloud Cover for Regions Within MODIS/PRISM Max and Min Temperature Thresholds (Apr - Oct)





GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES – PROPOSED SLO COAST AVA AND CENTRAL COAST AVA

<u>FEATURES</u>	<u>IN PROPOSED SLO COAST AVA</u>	<u>IN CENTRAL COAST AVA</u>	<u>NEW OR SHARED DISTINGUISHING FEATURE</u>
<u>Climate: Temperature</u>	<p>Due to the moderating effect of the maritime climate, the proposed AVA is characterized by moderate minimum temperatures during the growing season (between 47.5 – 52 degrees for over 90% of the proposed AVA), moderate seasonal and diurnal temperature shifts (no more than 20-30 degrees), and low maximum temperatures during the growing season (between 70-78 degrees for 68% of the proposed AVA).</p> <p>(Appendix 7; Appendix 8; Pages 18-19)</p>	<p>Minimum low temperatures and maximum high temperatures in the Central Coast AVA are similarly moderated by the maritime climate, but there is greater microclimate variation throughout the much larger Central Coast AVA.</p> <p>“It is ATF’s experience that smaller viticultural areas tend to be more uniform in their climatic characteristics, while very large areas... tend to exhibit general similar characteristics...”</p> <p>(Page 20-21; Establishment of the North Coast Viticultural Area, 48 Fed. Reg. 42,973 (September 21, 1983))</p>	<p>The climates of the proposed AVA and the Central Coast AVA are similarly moderated by the influence of the Pacific Ocean.</p> <p>The proposed AVA is a more specifically defined “coastal” grape growing region within the Central Coast AVA, consisting of the portion of San Luis Obispo County that is most directly influenced by the maritime climate.</p> <p>(Page 8)</p>

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES – PROPOSED SLO COAST AVA AND CENTRAL COAST AVA

<u>FEATURES</u>	<u>IN PROPOSED SLO COAST AVA</u>	<u>IN CENTRAL COAST AVA</u>	<u>NEW OR SHARED DISTINGUISHING FEATURE</u>
<u>Climate: Fog/Marine Influence</u>	<p>The vast majority of the proposed AVA experiences nighttime fog cover between 35% and 55% of all nights during the growing season.</p> <p>(Appendix 9; Page 22-23)</p>	<p>The Central Coast rulemaking does not provide specific evidence of the impact of fog on the viticultural area, but the presence of fog during the growing season is typical of a “coastal” AVA.</p>	<p>While both the Central Coast AVA and the proposed AVA experience fog during the growing season, the proposed AVA likely experiences higher average nighttime fog cover than the Central Coast AVA because the Central Coast AVA stretches further inland, where the influence of the maritime climate dissipates.</p>
<u>Climate: Degree Days</u>	<p>The average weighted GDD in the proposed AVA is 2493 and is therefore classified as Region I.</p> <p>(Appendix 6; Page 17-18)</p>	<p>The Central Coast AVA consists approximately of 33% Region I, 45% Region II, and 22% Region III.</p> <p>(Establishment of the Central Coast Viticultural Area, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 49 Fed. Reg. 28,257 (July 11, 1984))</p>	<p>GDD in the proposed AVA and the Central Coast AVA is similarly moderated by the influence of the Pacific Ocean, but the proposed AVA generally experiences lower GDD. The Central Coast AVA is fairly evenly distributed across Regions I, II and III, while over 93% off the proposed AVA is within Regions I and II and only about 6.3% of the proposed AVA falls within Region III.</p> <p>(Page 18)</p>

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES – PROPOSED SLO COAST AVA AND CENTRAL COAST AVA

<u>FEATURES</u>	<u>IN PROPOSED SLO COAST AVA</u>	<u>IN CENTRAL COAST AVA</u>	<u>NEW OR SHARED DISTINGUISHING FEATURE</u>
<u>Geology/Soils</u>	<p>The soils found in the proposed AVA are primarily of older geology, consisting mainly of clay and clay loam soils with considerable mineral complexity and loamy marine basin deposits.</p> <p>(Appendix 10; Page 26-27)</p>	<p>The Central Coast rulemaking does not include any information regarding geology and soils.</p>	<p>Not available.</p>
<u>Physical Features/Elevation</u>	<p>The proposed AVA is bounded on the west by the Pacific Ocean and on the east by the Santa Lucia Mountain Range.</p>	<p>The Central Coast AVA is bounded on the west by the Pacific Ocean and the east by the California Coastal Ranges.</p>	<p>Both the proposed AVA and the Central Coast AVA are bounded on the west by the Pacific Ocean and on the east by a coastal mountain range. The Central Coast AVA includes the Paso Robles AVA, which is east of the mountain range that serves as the eastern boundary of the proposed AVA (the Santa Lucia Mountain Range), but experiences the moderating affects of the maritime climate to a certain degree.</p> <p>(Page 15)</p>

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES – SLO COAST AVA AND SURROUNDING AREAS

<u>FEATURES</u>	<u>IN PROPOSED SLO COAST AVA</u>	<u>TO THE NORTH</u>	<u>TO THE EAST</u>	<u>TO THE SOUTH</u>	<u>TO THE WEST</u>
<u>Climate:</u> <u>Temperature</u>	<p>Due to the moderating effect of the maritime climate, the proposed AVA is characterized by moderate minimum temperatures during the growing season (between 47.5 – 52 degrees for over 90% of the proposed AVA), moderate seasonal and diurnal temperature shifts (no more than 20-30 degrees), and low maximum temperatures during the growing season (between 70-78 degrees for 68% of the proposed AVA).</p> <p>(Appendix 7; Appendix 8; Pages 18-20)</p>	<p>Because the infiltration of the maritime climate is inhibited by dramatic elevation and topography, the area north of the proposed AVA generally experiences warmer minimum and maximum temperatures during the growing season.</p> <p>(Appendix 7; Appendix 8)</p>	<p>Because the Santa Lucia Mountain Range is a barrier to the intrusion of the marine influence, the area to the east of the proposed AVA generally experiences cooler minimum temperatures and warmer maximum temperatures during the growing season. The area east of the proposed AVA also experiences more extreme seasonal and diurnal temperature shifts (40-50 degrees).</p> <p>(Appendix 7; Appendix 8; Page 15-16)</p>	<p>Due to the flat, open topography of the Santa Maria Valley, the area south of the proposed AVA experiences a more direct marine influence further inland and is therefore characterized by slightly warmer minimum temperatures and slightly cooler maximum temperatures during the growing season.</p> <p>(Appendix 7; Appendix 8)</p>	Pacific Ocean

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES – SLO COAST AVA AND SURROUNDING AREAS

<u>FEATURES</u>	<u>IN PROPOSED SLO COAST AVA</u>	<u>TO THE NORTH</u>	<u>TO THE EAST</u>	<u>TO THE SOUTH</u>	<u>TO THE WEST</u>
<u>Climate: Fog/Marine Influence</u>	<p>The vast majority of the proposed AVA experiences nighttime fog cover between 35% and 55% of all nights during the growing season.</p> <p>(Appendix 9; Page 22-23)</p>	<p>The area north of the proposed AVA experiences less nighttime fog cover (between less than 15% and 35% of all nights during the growing season).</p> <p>(Appendix 9)</p>	<p>The area east of the proposed AVA experiences less nighttime fog cover (between less than 15% and 35% of all nights during the growing season).</p> <p>(Appendix 9)</p>	<p>The area south of the proposed AVA experiences more nighttime fog cover than the vast majority of the proposed AVA due to the flatter topography and wide open entrance to the valley directly from the Pacific Ocean.</p> <p>(Appendix 9)</p>	Pacific Ocean
<u>Climate: Degree Days</u>	<p>The average weighted GDD in the proposed AVA is 2493 and is therefore classified as Region I.</p> <p>(Appendix 6; Page 17-18)</p>	<p>GDD in area north of the proposed AVA is generally characterized as Region II and Region III.</p> <p>(Appendix 6)</p>	<p>GDD in area east of the proposed AVA is generally characterized as high Region II, Region III and Region IV. The average weighted GDD in the Paso Robles AVA is 3425 (Region III).</p> <p>(Appendix 6; Page 18)</p>	<p>GDD south of the proposed AVA is generally classified as Region I near the coast and Region II moving inland toward the Santa Maria Valley AVA, where the weighted average GDD is 2733 (Region II).</p> <p>(Appendix 6; Page 18)</p>	Pacific Ocean

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES – SLO COAST AVA AND SURROUNDING AREAS

<u>FEATURES</u>	<u>IN PROPOSED SLO COAST AVA</u>	<u>TO THE NORTH</u>	<u>TO THE EAST</u>	<u>TO THE SOUTH</u>	<u>TO THE WEST</u>
<u>Geology/Soils</u>	<p>The soils found in the proposed AVA are primarily of older geology, consisting mainly of clay and clay loam soils with considerable mineral complexity and loamy marine basin deposits.</p> <p>(Appendix 10; Page 24-26)</p>	<p>The soils found in the area north of the proposed AVA include shallow to deep soils weather from marine deposits of sandstone and shale, shallow to deep soils derived from igneous and/or granitic rocks, shallow to deep soils derived from sandstone and shale, and shallow soils and rock outcrop derived from sandstone and metamorphic rock.</p> <p>(Appendix 10)</p>	<p>The soils found in the Santa Lucia Mountain Range consist of rock outcrop.</p> <p>(Appendix 10)</p> <p>The soils in the Paso Robles AVA generally consist of alluvial and terrace deposits which are typically fertile and well drained.</p> <p>(Establishment of Paso Robles Viticultural Area, 48 Fed. Reg. 45,239 (October 4, 1983))</p>	<p>The soils found in the Santa Maria Valley include large swaths of deep, fertile, sandy soils derived from alluvial deposits from the Santa Maria River and its tributaries. Soils in the proposed AVA are generally shallower, rockier, less fertile, and more complex in nature than those found in the area south of the proposed AVA.</p> <p>(Appendix 10; Page 27)</p>	Pacific Ocean

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES - SLO COAST AVA AND SURROUNDING AREAS

<u>FEATURES</u>	<u>IN PROPOSED SLO COAST AVA</u>	<u>TO THE NORTH</u>	<u>TO THE EAST</u>	<u>TO THE SOUTH</u>	<u>TO THE WEST</u>
<u>Physical Features/ Elevation</u>	<p>The proposed AVA consists of foothills, valleys and coastal terraces. Over 97% of the proposed AVA is at or below 1800 feet above sea level. The eastern boundary corresponds with the approximate limit of the influence of the marine layer and the western orientation of the Santa Lucia Mountain Range.</p> <p>(Page 14)</p>	<p>The area north of the proposed AVA is characterized by steeper elevations and topography, mountains, forests and rugged coastline, including Big Sur.</p>	<p>The Santa Lucia Mountain Range consists of steep elevations and topography.</p> <p>The Paso Robles AVA is consists of rolling hills and valleys with elevations from 720 feet to 2,400 feet above sea level. It is bounded by low mountain ranges on all four sides.</p> <p>(Establishment of Paso Robles Viticultural Area, 48 Fed. Reg. 45,239 (October 4, 1983); Petition to Establish the Paso Robles Willow Creek District American Viticultural Area, Page 9; Appendix 10)</p>	<p>The Santa Maria Valley is a wide and flat northwest/southeast valley with flat to rolling terrain that is a direct conduit to the marine influence.</p> <p>(Page 26-27)</p>	<p>Pacific Ocean</p>