

## Jennifer Blackman

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**From:** Cheryl Ruggiero <ruggierolawcorp@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 31, 2023 3:09 PM  
**To:** Jennifer Blackman  
**Cc:** Caitlin Bryhn Lacey; Alicia Gamez; Belle Wood  
**Subject:** Objection to BCLT's Request re Tacherra Ranch Project for a LWUP

Dear Jennifer and the BCPUD:

There is insufficient water to sustain the proposed housing plan -- 59 people (now 61) with 23 or more flushing toilets, showers, kitchen sinks, bathroom sinks, hoses, etc. The history of water usage at the Ranch is not helpful, as the Ranch tenants have had *very limited* access to water, despite the Tacherra Ranch *already being the second highest water recipient in the community*. What will this mean for our community? In times of drought, will Bolinas need to ship in water? Will water be available to ship in / purchase? Since more development is imminent if the plan is implemented, water will need to be rationed at a level that is unachievable. Based on my math, each person residing in an RV would need to use as little as 27 or 28 gallons per day. With 23 RVs, this is impossible to achieve and more water (beyond that allotted in the limited water use permit) will have to be sent to the Ranch for sanitary purposes, leaving the remainder of the community vulnerable in times of drought. And, of course, priority must be given to the Fire Department.

In addition, I want to point out the following:

1. A very similar plan was submitted by the Tacherras in 2000, with the BCLT promising its support. At that time, it was acknowledged that the tenants were living in substandard conditions. That permit application was opposed by the BCPUD due to *insufficient water* -- with the understanding that water wells would be drilled. According to documentation I have reviewed, nearby residents with wells were having to buy and ship in water; there was a deep concern that the Tacherras were going to tap into that already inadequate groundwater. *According to Paul Kayfetz' letter, sufficient water availability could not be assured*; it was understood that the BCPUD could not provide a sufficient amount of water. That 2000 permit application was withdrawn about two years later, seemingly after the County posed numerous questions that we are asking now.
2. Neither the BCLT nor the Tacherra's Receiver were proactive during the last 10-20 years in terms of finding proper housing for the tenants at the Ranch. Instead, the conditions only worsened, with all parties involved having specific knowledge of the deplorable situation. This is NOT an emergency; it was self-created.
3. The "emergency" appears to have been planned, as reflected in Larry Baskin's email to the County asking for an inspection. Abatement *already* had been required of the Receiver.
4. The "emergency" permit application does not take into account the fact that the subsequent and required regular coastal permit application must fail because the plan is inconsistent with the regulations governing agricultural worker housing. It is my understanding that only a tiny fraction of the 59 or 61 tenants are, indeed, ag workers. I notice the disclosure of that number has not yet been provided to the County. The BCLT has categorized this project as "agricultural worker housing" but has represented it to the community as "affordable housing." Current zoning at that location does not allow for "affordable housing."
5. The "existing agricultural access road" was not, in fact, pre-existing as stated in the BCLT's plan. It is my understanding that the road was recently created by dumping gravel onto the wetlands. (See Jack Siedman's email of 05/30/2023.)

The Tacherra Ranch tenants, who have suffered significantly over these past decades, have options that may or may not have been represented to them – California law provides a statutory basis for compensation in situations just like this one. They have rights that do not include agricultural worker housing at the Ranch, but rather compensation that includes monetary damages for the long-standing legal violations and, importantly, for their intense emotional distress. The community members at the Ranch need good legal advice, not false assurances for a plan that legally must fail.

Although it seems predetermined that the BCPUD will grant the permit (based on the BCPUD's president's emotional-based comments to the community), water and development decisions should not be based on emotions, but rather rational and thoughtful consideration of the law and the reality of our limited and life-sustaining resource – water.

Thank you,  
Cheryl

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