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Ann Van Leer is the founder and president of Land Conservation Brokerage, Inc (LCB). Van Leer has over thirty years of conservation experience at the federal, state and local levels.

After establishing LCB in 2003, Van Leer immediately began assisting clients in initiating, managing and completing both large and small land conservation projects.

Van Leer's experience includes serving as the San Diego County Project Director for The Nature Conservancy, where she initiated and managed multi-million dollar conservation land transactions. In addition, she has over two decades of experience in public policy, including conservation policy, at the federal, state and local levels.

Van Leer is a real estate broker licensed in the State of California and a member of the California Association of Realtors and the San Diego Association of Realtors.

Van Leer has a master's degree in public administration and public policy from the London School of Economics and a bachelor's degree in environmental studies from the University of California at Santa Barbara.

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July 18, 2016

Council President Sheri Lightner, District 1  
City of San Diego  
202 C Street, 10<sup>th</sup> floor  
San Diego, CA 92101

**RE: Polo Fields Lease to Surf Cup LLC, CEQA Exemption**

Dear Council President Lightner,

Our daughter played soccer for years and we had many happy days as a family on the soccer field. I support soccer use of the Polo Fields that is well managed, mitigates for its impacts, and honors the Polo Fields' location in the San Dieguito River Valley. In that regard, I am writing to urge the City Council to: (1) require environmental review of the Polo Fields lease to Surf Cup LLC and, (2) require Surf Cup LLC to restore the Coast to Crest Trail as per the recommendations of the San Dieguito River Park Joint Powers Authority and the city's Request for Proposals.

Environmental Review:

I live in the Senterra community in the City of San Diego, in District 1. Senterra was developed by Watt Industries. As part of the master plan which included Senterra, Watt Industries deeded what is now known as the Polo Fields to the city with an easement that required the land be kept in open space. Exhibit B (4a) to the grant deed says the land can be used for non-commercial recreational uses, but only those "not involving large assemblages of people or automobiles."

My understanding is that the site has been leased to the Polo Club which has been sub-letting it for other uses including soccer. In recent years, use by soccer and other large recreational assemblages has been allowed to incrementally grow without any discernable mitigation for the impacts associated with those uses. The city is now proposed to lease the property directly to Surf Cup LLC through 2044, the year when the deed restrictions terminate. The Request for Council Action from Real Estate Assets declares the action categorically exempt from CEQA.

Senterra is at the north end of the city, on the south side of the San Dieguito River Valley. Via De La Valle is a primary road to access Highway 5 for many City of San Diego residents (including residents of Rancho Pacifica, Fairbanks Ranch, and Olde El Camino Real). When large tournaments occur on the Polo Fields, traffic backs up in all directions. Personally I have been stuck in traffic backups for 30 minutes+/- during soccer and other large Polo Field events. While the same roads are crowded during the County Fair, the roads are passable as the fair traffic is well managed compared to soccer traffic.

The river valley is extremely popular with bicyclists and pedestrians, especially on weekends. Poorly managed Polo Fields' traffic puts both at risk when people start parking outside the fields during large events as they can't get to the fields by car due to traffic backups and, instead, scramble by foot over the San Dieguito bridge (even when the signs are posted no pedestrian crossing).

Not only is soccer/other tournament traffic a huge inconvenience, the environmental impacts associated with this congestion have never been mitigated and, by declaring the lease exempt from CEQA, the city

is guaranteeing current and future environmental impacts will also never be mitigated. We know that motor vehicles are one of the largest sources of greenhouse gas emissions. In a city which touts its climate action plan, declaring this lease exempt from CEQA is disappointing.

Additionally, current soccer/other tournament usage of the site, which it appears will continue under the proposed lease, seems to be in violation of the deed restriction on large assemblages. I have personally observed the fields in use by 1,000s of people (and their cars) during tournaments. Any casual observer would agree tournaments on the scale that have been presented *are* large assemblies.

San Dieguito River Valley and the Coast to Crest Trail:

The city should be proud of its role in co-founding the San Dieguito River Park JPA and its support of the Coast to Crest Trail. The Polo Fields are located in the center of the most highly visible portion of the San Dieguito River Valley and their use has a tremendous impact on the entire valley. Per the JPA staff report, a City civil penalty order was issued to the Polo Club to restore damaged sections of the river and trail. The City's RFP included language that the new leaseholder would have to restore damage caused by the Polo Club yet that requirement is not in the Surf Cup LLC lease with the city. I suspect one of the reasons the city didn't get additional responses to the RFP was due to the restoration requirement, which may have scared off those who would otherwise have responded. To advertise that the restoration work is required, then not require it, leaves the work undone, and a loss to trail users and the river valley.

CEQA should apply to all projects fairly and all project impacts should be measured and addressed. I have been involved with environmental restoration projects that generate no traffic and no air quality impacts as they improve the environment through habitat enhancement. But they too are subject to environmental review. In those cases, we've paid our fees, developed our CEQA documents, mitigated if needed, and got in line with everyone else. Surf Cup LLC should be required to do the same.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
DocuSigned by:  
*Ann Van Leer*

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cc: Honorable Mayor and City Council  
San Dieguito River Park JPA  
Friends of the San Dieguito River Valley  
San Diego County Bicycle Coalition  
Circulate San Diego