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Patricia Damery Updated Aug 24, 2016

MORE INFORMATION

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Reject Walt Ranch

In a recent Napa Valley Register article, "State court declines to revive Napa watershed measure for November ballot,"

Chairman of the Board of Supervisors Alfredo Pedroza was quoted or paraphrased in a number of disturbing statements

Pedroza claims to be confident that the county, wine, and farming sectors will have whatever discussions need to be had on watershed issues, citing the formation of Agricultural Protection Advisory Committee (APAC) by the county. Yes, the county formed APAC, but has not followed its recommendations.

Watershed protection seems to be lower down the list of priorities, after protecting property rights, elevating direct

marketing to an accessory use of agriculture and allowing fragile hillside Ag Watershed lands to be clearcut for "great cabs." We need champions for the environment, so critical in our changing climate, and this initiative was an agent of those champions.

Pedroza seems to think the formation of Napa Green environmental certification programs for wineries and land fill the bill. Although these programs are good, they are also voluntary and do not limit the use of agricultural chemicals, including glyphosate, whose use has only increased. These chemicals are finding their way into our water.

But perhaps the most egregious of these statements by Pedroza is, "We don't need an initiative hanging over our heads."

"We?" Who is he talking about? Certainly not the almost 6,300 people who signed the petition wanting to vote on the initiative— more people, I might add, than voted for Pedroza the June primary. Why is the Board of Supervisors not insisting that Napa citizens get to vote on an initiative shockingly blocked by a small technicality, even after it was certified? What master is this process serving?

We, the 6,300 people, are worried about our climate, our watersheds, and our water. What happens in the watersheds drains into the facets of the city of Napa and presents itself in the smell of the periodic, supposed safe, brown, treated water.

This is nothing less than a moral issue: Suppression of a people's right to vote on an issue that profoundly impacts them now and into the future. When the trees that restore and maintain watershed health are gone, at best, they are gone for a very long time, even if replanted. This suppression of the right to vote is a twin to the moral issue of "can these projects


which clearcut our watersheds be done?"— and often after variances and road exclusions— but "should they?"

It has never been more important for citizens to insist our voices are heard, or to replace those who do not hear us.

Patricia Damery

Napa

Currents

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