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**John L. Smith, Ph.D.**  
**NIVG Consulting, LLC**  
**9042 NW Murdock ST.**  
**Portland, Or 97229**

2018 AUG 20 AM 11:24  
RECEIVED  
PLANNING DEPARTMENT

August 17, 2018

Roger Trout, Executive Secretary  
El Dorado County Planning Commission  
2850 Fairlane Court, Placerville, CA 95667

Re: Oakstone Winery Revision to an Existing Conditional Use Permit Project File No. S04-001-R-2

Dear Mr. Trout and Commissioners:

Stephen and Elizabeth Ryan, owners of Oakstone Winery, were able to purchase that facility in 2012 following a devastating fire at the original property, where they were employed as winemaker and business manager. With meager resources and minimal equipment, they worked tirelessly to build the new facility into a winery that is now respected as a center of wine excellence in El Dorado County. The wines they produce have continued to win accolades in regional and statewide competitions, and the winery has been recognized as the keystone of what is now a significant winery area, first planted in 1981 by Ron Mansfield.

As the builder and founder of both wineries, and as owner of adjacent vineyard property that is leased to the Ryans, I wish to add my support for these proposed minor changes to the original Conditional Use Permit. The original Use Permit was requested fourteen years ago with no knowledge that this property would someday become the sole source of livelihood for two people who now also own the property on which the original winery was built. As a result of their diligent efforts, the new winery has continued, and even exceeded, the reputation of that pioneering winery facility.

The existing facility is capable of additional production beyond the original case production limit, and should be allowed to be open for business on additional days beyond the original limitation. The winery owners own or lease 24 acres of grapes on and adjacent to the winery property, and would be able to convert those grapes into wine that is made and sold locally, instead of being shipped out of county, as many tons of El Dorado grapes are currently. These requested changes can be accommodated within the existing site plan, without the need for any expansion.

Susan and I still own the adjacent property at 6428 Slug Gulch Road with six acres of grapes, and strongly encourage the Commission to recommend approval of the proposed changes to the

Conditional Use Permit. We would be delighted to see the continuation and improvement of the traditions we helped to build in that area beginning in 1997.

Your consideration and recommendation of this project will help to maintain the vibrancy and health of the agricultural community in the County, and will reward the determination of the owners to continue the tradition of excellence in grape growing and winemaking for which the County has received continuing accolades.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John L. Smith". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

John L. Smith,  
Former member, El Dorado Agricultural Commission