

WOODSTOCK PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION
P.O. Box 446, Santa Ynez, California 93460
July 18th, 2024

UC Natural Reserve System & UCSB Sedgwick Reserve Leadership,

The Lake Fire event we just experienced was terrifying and we are all lucky to be communicating today in a position of gratitude for the heroic efforts of local and out of state fire authorities that reduced this threat to our community. Had the winds shifted our direction on any given day in a more significant way, I am certain that we would not have been so lucky.

WPOA recognizes that the Sedgwick Reserve has lost nearly ½, or approximately 3000 of the near 6000 acres, of habitat on the Reserve, and for that WPOA has great empathy for your loss. We recognize that much of your habitat, research sites, and field studies that were in-progress must have been lost, which must be a significant blow to your Staff, fellow academics, and other constituents. WPOA empathizes with your loss, but I would like to clearly state that we do not have much sympathy.

The Lake Fire we just experienced was a quickly evolving situation that posed a great threat immediately to our combined properties. That threat was exacerbated by the heavy fuel load present on the Sedgwick Reserve due to negligent rangeland management of the property over recent years. Our Woodstock Property Owners Association is shocked by and intolerant of the Sedgwick Reserve leadership's recent actions and inactions that took place before and during this unfortunate event. Last week, our residents and neighboring communities, whose properties are valued by our estimate at \$800 million +, became quickly at risk as the wildfire quickly spread through Sedgwick. Again, had the winds shifted our direction on any given day, local authorities and WPOA are certain the loss of property in our community would have been catastrophic.

It is with much consideration that the WPOA Board has produced the following observations, facts, and actionable solutions that we expect Sedgwick Reserve leadership to execute and address immediately:

1. Lack of Fire Mitigation or Emergency Fire Plan: We recognize that your resources have been dedicated to developing the recent county approved Vegetation Management Plan. A plan that primarily considers controlled burns to manage rangeland along the Reserve, clearly with WPOA in mind. But, according to the Preserve Director, in an email to me dated June 14th of this year, Sedgwick did not have any "UCNRS Standard fire mitigation plan" or emergency fire plan in place prior to July 5th's ignition. Senior staff, except for Lyza Johnson the Reserve Manager, vacated the Reserve almost immediately during the critical early stages of the fire. At that moment, it became clear to the WPOA Board and its neighbor Oak Trails Estates that Sedgwick leadership was paralyzed. At that moment, WPOA & OTE began to muster our response to the pending disaster and we provided immediate support to Lyza and County & CalFire first responders. Thank you to Heather, Preserve Director, for verbally approving WPOA entering with our Dozer crew through the Sedgwick gate as the fire began to advance down Lisque Canyon. This support and action

Remington Hotchkis, President; **Susan Weber**, Vice President; **Bob Duncan**, Treasurer; **Barbara Cox-Winter**, Secretary; **Ryan Autry**, Director-at-Large; **Stefan Anderson**, Ranch Manager (805)259-9796, woodstocksantaynez@outlook.com); **Dave Mexico**, Water Manager (805)896-3723, dmex8558@hwy246.net); **Paul Matsukas** (805) 325-1457; **Michelle Adams**, Bookkeeper (michelle@sorensoncpas.com);

WOODSTOCK PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 446, Santa Ynez, California 93460

July 18th, 2024

proved valuable as is evidenced now on upper Lisque canyon - the last line of defense for the fire, which stopped ~200 yards from WPOA's north property line.

Actionable solution:

WPOA demands a Fire Mitigation and Emergency Response Plan from the Sedgwick Reserve's leadership within the next 30 days. There is still a heavy fuel load present on the Reserve and it is an unacceptable liability to not have these action plans in place immediately.

This Fire mitigation and emergency plans must address the following to satisfy WPOA:

- **Fire & fine fuels vegetation management plan, which includes rangeland cattle grazing & other practices to properly reduce fire fuels to a minimal threat annually.**
- **Emergency action plan to address the threat of wildfire, the proactive actions leadership must take at the onset of a wildfire, and the prioritized preventative measures necessary to best protect WPOA and neighboring communities from the threat of wildfire crossing over from the Reserve.**
- **Routine annual maintenance plan for roads and trails to ensure emergency responders have the means to always navigate the preserve, especially in an emergency.**
- **Must include a formally established Fire Line and Fire Break within the Lisque Canyon, which was developed and recently utilized by local authorities as the "last line of defense" for WPOA. This valuable line is to remain and be maintained in perpetuity.**

2. Poor Road & Trail Access Due to Heavy Brush: The Sedgwick Reserve has more closed trails and inaccessible auxiliary road sections on the property than in years past. Sections that were navigable by pickup truck a year ago were barely accessible by foot prior to the fire. Many old research trails/roads have become completely impassable since late 2023.

Actionable solution:

WPOA demands the Sedgwick Reserve engages key county authorities or contractors annually to maintain trails and the many roads within the preserve. This work is to be in addition to the volunteer trail clearing efforts on the Reserve.

3. Decision to remove Cattle Grazing for the 1st time in over 100 years: The decision to remove the cattle in 2023 quickly worried our community. This worry only increased as the grass grew over the past year, and the threat of a wildfire reaching our community became imminent. Our WPOA Board and community believe this decision was a near fatal mistake that exacerbated the loss of habitat throughout the NW section of the Reserve and exponentially increased the risk to WPOA, Oak Trail Estates, and communities beyond. During the fire, numerous firefighters within the command structure told members of our WPOA Board that the fuel load on the Reserve was well beyond what they had seen on other fires.

Remington Hotchkis, President; Susan Weber, Vice President; Bob Duncan, Treasurer; Barbara Cox-Winter, Secretary; Ryan Autry, Director-at-Large; Stefan Anderson, Ranch Manager (805)259-9796, woodstocksantaynez@outlook.com); Dave Mexico, Water Manager (805)896-3723, dmex8558@hwy246.net); Paul Matsukas (805) 325-1457; Michelle Adams, Bookkeeper (michelle@sorensoncpas.com);

WOODSTOCK PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION
P.O. Box 446, Santa Ynez, California 93460
July 18th, 2024

Actionable solution:

WPOA demands that Sedgwick Leadership engage a cattle lease operator immediately and include in their stewardship policy and Sedgwick Reserve management plan that a cattle lease is always mandatory, in perpetuity. It is WPOA's understanding that the Reserve must have an agricultural component to the property via non-profit legal requirement, of which Cattle Grazing would suffice. I also encourage your leadership to learn from the great utilization of Cattle Grazing as a rangeland management tool developed by The Nature Conservancy and practiced on the Dangermond Preserve.

4. Sedgwick Leadership ignored WPOA's member offer to Install a County Approved DIP STATION: Last summer with the departure of the cattle, Sedgwick was offered a fully paid for HeloPod Dip Station that would have permitted rotor aircraft to quickly 'water up' for emergency spot fire protection. WPOA's member was working on the topic with Lyza, Reserve Manager, and would have provided the water source, and a private donor offered to donate \$70,000 to fund the HeloPod. All that was needed was permission to place the fire protection shipping container somewhere in the Sedgwick Lisque Valley which would have provided the safest ingress/egress for the helicopters in an emergency. After months of being told it was under consideration by the Reserve, it became clear it was not a priority for them. The offer from WPOA member that was made is no longer on the table.

Actionable solution:

WPOA demands Sedgwick install a Dip Station in Lisque Canyon, in a location previously identified by county fire officials, at their expense and before the end of this year '24.

5. WPOA Raised Funds for Fire Watch Camera System: WPOA owners assisted in raising funds a year ago for a state-of-the-art Fire Watch Camera System, to be placed on the 360 degree fire lookout at 'Roller Coaster Ridge'. This technology was designed to locate even the lightest smoke from spot fires to immediately get resources where needed. A year later, all that stands in the location of the proposed camera system is a concrete foundation. Installation was clearly not a priority for the Reserve. Bottom line - WPOA owners and your donors were told by Sedgwick Management that this system would be installed before years end of 2023, and it was not. This is unacceptable.

Actionable solution:

WPOA demands that this system is installed before the years end 2024.

Remington Hotchkis, President; Susan Weber, Vice President; Bob Duncan, Treasurer; Barbara Cox-Winter, Secretary; Ryan Autry, Director-at-Large; Stefan Anderson, Ranch Manager (805)259-9796, woodstocksantaynez@outlook.com); Dave Mexico, Water Manager (805)896-3723, dmex8558@hwy246.net); Paul Matsukas (805) 325-1457; Michelle Adams, Bookkeeper (michelle@sorensoncpas.com);

WOODSTOCK PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 446, Santa Ynez, California 93460

July 18th, 2024

6. Failure of the Sedgwick Fire Fighting Water System: At a critical moment when the 'blocking' fire was to be set to the north, WPOA received a call that there was no water for the tankers. WPOA scrambled our water technicians to a check valve that borders the Reserve and they were able to get the flow going again. Because the Reserve never planned for a fire, it's clear they had never tested their water volume capability for filling up large trucks. This shut down of water occurred at least 2 more times in critical moments. Each time WPOA sent our technicians out at our expense to fix the issue caused by the too rapid withdrawal of water from our water system. At the least, Sedgwick should have had a large "accumulator" bladder or tank already in the water system for such eventualities.

Actionable solution:

WPOA requests that we revisit the agreement from 2006 – titled “Easement Agreement and Temporary Construction License” and execute an amendment to the agreement to address the following:

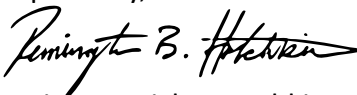
- **Extension of WPOA’s right to place a New Reservoir on the Sedgwick Reserve to benefit both parties.**
- **The installation cost, use of, and fees associated with use of water to be re-negotiated.**
- **Installation of the necessary equipment (accumulator or tank) to provide the correct water service to authorities when working on site in a future emergency.**

In closing, I expect you will find that WPOA’s demands and requests are simple, fair, and straight forward. I encourage your leadership to act swiftly with corrective actions. The WPOA Board and our greater community will not tolerate any excuses, belaboring of any of the above points, or lack of swift execution by UCNRS, UCSB, or Sedgwick Reserve leadership of the simple actionable solutions provided.

To be clear, we are a strong community that expects more of our neighbor. The WPOA Board, our greater SYV community, and many key Sedgwick supporters’ eyes are on the execution of our stated actionable solutions.

Our community expects exemplary rangeland stewardship of the Sedgwick Reserve going forward with resources and action plans in place for Reserve leadership to manage the property more effectively and act more proactively, especially during a wildfire emergency.

Respectfully,



Remington Bixby Hotchkis

President | Woodstock Property Owners Association

Remington Hotchkis, President; **Susan Weber**, Vice President; **Bob Duncan**, Treasurer; **Barbara Cox-Winter**, Secretary; **Ryan Autry**, Director-at-Large; **Stefan Anderson**, Ranch Manager (805)259-9796, woodstocksantaynez@outlook.com); **Dave Mexico**, Water Manager (805)896-3723, dmex8558@hwvy246.net); **Paul Matsukas** (805) 325-1457; **Michelle Adams**, Bookkeeper (michelle@sorensoncpas.com);