

The 2015 – 2016 Santa Barbara County Civil Grand Jury

For Immediate Release

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News Release

## **Deciduous Oak Tree Protection**

In 1997, a vintner in Santa Barbara County (County) cleared a large tract of land and in the process, removed ancient deciduous oak trees. There was an outcry from members of the public and, during the following rainy season, due to the absence of the trees, a severe change to the topography of the land occurred.

In 2003, the County Board of Supervisors (BOS) enacted an ordinance to preserve the deciduous oak trees in the County titled the “Deciduous Oak Tree Protection and Regeneration Ordinance”. The 2015 – 2016 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury (Jury) reviewed this ordinance and its enforcement by interviewing landowners, tree experts, and various County staff. The Jury also reviewed a staff report to the BOS concerning the protection and regeneration of oak trees in the County.

The Jury found that the ordinance has been a success. The Jury wrote a report on their investigation titled “Deciduous Oak Tree Protection”.

The report may be found on the Grand Jury’s website at [www.sbcgj.org](http://www.sbcgj.org).

The Santa Barbara County Civil Grand Jury is a basic part of government within the judicial branch. The Grand Jury acts independently, yet is under the general control of the Superior Court Presiding Judge to assure that it acts in accordance with the Penal Code of the State of California.

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