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Southern California Association of Governments »

WEBFORM SUBMISSION

Submitted by user

Topic:
Housing and RHNA

Your Name:
Mary Jo Egus

Email:
[REDACTED]

Subject:
Concerns about RHNA

Message:
To Whom It May Concern:

I am a concerned citizen who lives in Orange County, California, in the unincorporated community of Coto de Caza that neighbors Ranch

Santa Margarita. I have recently learned that 680 additional homes are being mandated to be added to RSM's General Plan. I have also learned that an appeal was made and rejected by SCAG. I am concerned about what mandates are being made for the unincorporated areas of Orange county, especially for Coto de Caza. Both of these communities use the same roads for ingress and egress. Adding more homes would only cause more problems for an area that has been identified with already-strained opportunities for egress in an emergency.

A recently published analysis from Street Light Data examined population density data about the routes commonly driven within a community and the number of points of egress to identify the most "evacuation-limited" communities in the country. Coto de Caza tops the list for cities in California. Here is the address to this study.
<https://www.kqed.org/science/1946668/data-pinpoints-14-california-communities-with-most-limited-emergency-escape-2-routes>

In the last 120 days there have been 2 major wildfires (the Bond fire - December 2020 and the Silverado fire - October 2020) which were a straight-line distance of approximately 10 miles from the city of Rancho Santa Margarita. These two wildfires combined were responsible for burning 20,590 acres of land and called for 115,000 people to evacuate their homes. In addition, 2 other wildfires (the Live Oak fire and the Dove Canyon/Coto de Caza fire) were in or within 3 miles of Rancho Santa Margarita in the past 6 months. Per the 2010 US Census 47,853 residents already live within Rancho Santa Margarita along with another 15,000 residents in Coto de Caza. Subsequently, it is imperative that the issues of evacuation and access to emergency services be a number one priority. Given that the County of Orange Fire Authority (OC Fire Authority) designated Rancho Santa Margarita and Coto de Caza as being in a "Fire Hazard Severity Zone", these communities are unsuitable for any further housing developments. This OC Fire Authority designation indicates that the development of more housing within this area represents a clear danger to the public safety of over 52,000 residents due to the continued high risk of wildfires. Furthermore, numerous homeowners within the communities have had their homeowner/fire insurance canceled because these homes are in a "Fire Hazard Severity Zone". This emphasizes that insurance companies consider these communities to be at high risk of being damaged or destroyed by wildfires.

Please do not mandate further development of housing into these communities given the serious public safety danger that already exists here.

Sincerely,
Mary Jo Egus