

Public comment at 12/7/11 Monterey County Board of Supervisors meeting by Michael Baroni.

1. My name is Michael Baroni. I was born in Monterey County, and I am the owner of Green Pedal Couriers. Green Pedal delivers documents to the courthouse in Salinas as well as providing other bike courier services in Salinas and on the Peninsula.
2. I bike Blanco Road when I make those trips between Salinas and Monterey, and I'm grateful the Transportation Agency planners identified Blanco as one of the most important routes in the county to have bike lanes.
3. At first, it seemed impossible to understand why farmers would have any objections to cyclists on Blanco. Then I talked with Mari Lynch, a county resident whose dad farmed, and who does a community service website, [BicyclingMonterey.com](http://BicyclingMonterey.com). I became aware of two ongoing worries for many farmers—preventing theft of ag equipment and preventing contamination of fields.
4. Green Pedal Couriers will commit to serving as a Neighborhood Watch for farmers with land along Blanco whenever we're biking that road. We're happy to do this, because we always have our cell phones with us and can easily call police dispatch to report suspicious activity.
5. Having more cyclists on Blanco—including Green Pedal Couriers and some other cyclists volunteering to serve as Neighborhood Watch—can help fight crimes like theft of ag equipment or trespassing in fields.
6. When you're on your bike, you're close to what's going on in the neighborhoods around you. When you're biking next to farm land, you can easily be alert to things that look out of place.
7. You might see a parked pick-up truck with people who clearly are *not* field workers hanging around farm equipment.
8. You might see people hopping out of a car to go help themselves to some produce—people who are clueless that this isn't just a matter of stealing a small amount of veggies, it's also flat-out trespassing. And farmers are justified in being concerned about trespassers contaminating fields.
9. Is there anything I'd like from the farmers in turn? Yes. Just as the military cleans their equipment before entering civilian roads, it's important that this become a regular practice with farm equipment too. This may not seem easy, but who says farming is easy!
10. We've got money for these lanes now. Surely we're not gonna tell CalTrans, "Oh, we decided we don't want better bike infrastructure in *this* part of Monterey County."
11. Highway 68 lanes have been denied. We need Blanco lanes so people can bike more safely between Salinas the Peninsula. We've already got the money, our Transportation Agency experts recognized this is the safest route. So let's get the Blanco lanes in!

–Mike Baroni, 831-920-8181 – <http://www.greenpedal.org>