



WORKING
LANDS,
**WORKING
ARTISTS**

Project Overview &
Stakeholder Engagement
JACKIE BAXTON

Working Lands, Working Artists: District 2

Overview



**WORKING LANDS,
WORKING ARTISTS**

Working Lands, Working Artists engages local artists in the design and installation of public art/creative placemaking projects exploring Mariposa’s relationship with agriculture and working landscapes. This project is intended to support *Mariposa County Planning Department’s Agriculture and Working Lands Conservation Plan (AWLCP)* and aligns with recommendations in the *Mariposa County Creative Placemaking Strategy*.

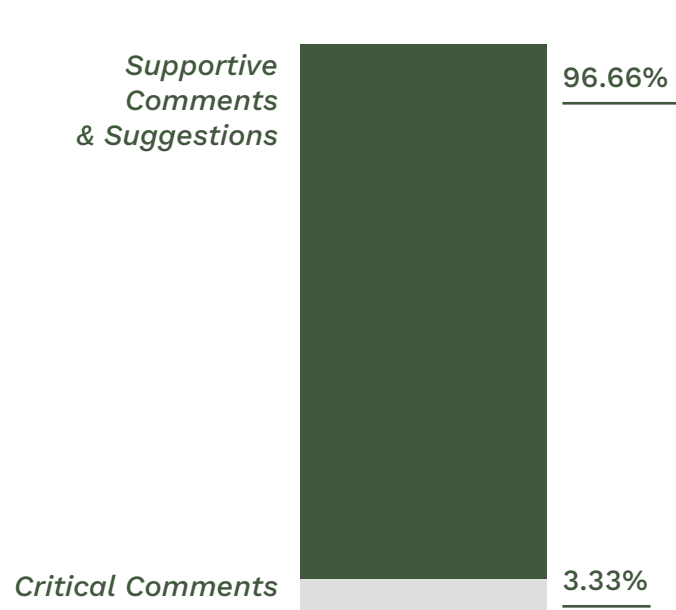


**AGRICULTURAL AND WORKING
LANDS CONSERVATION PLAN
(AWLCP)**

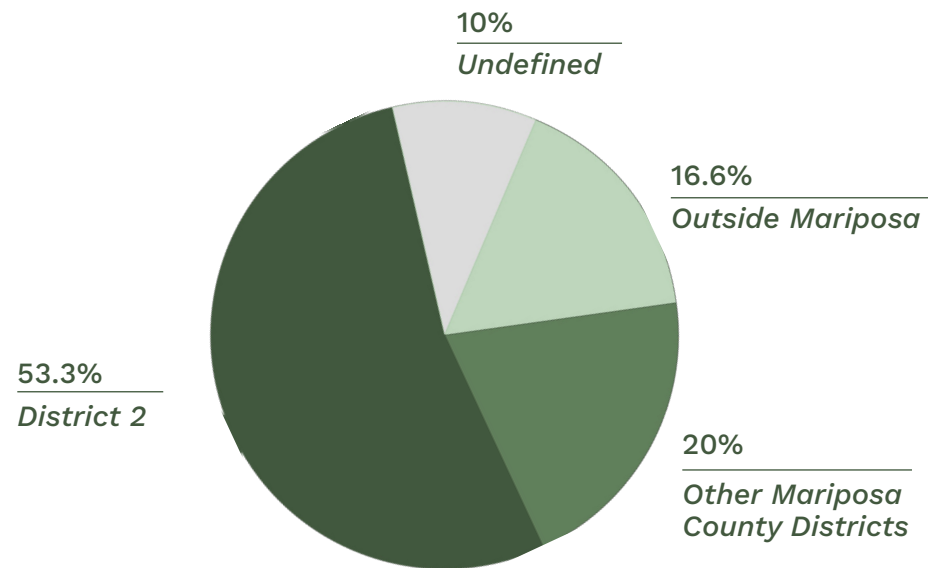
Agricultural and Working Lands Conservation Plan (AWLCP) is a planning project that supports sustainability for the County’s agricultural landscapes and lifeways. The art concepts created by selected *Working Lands, Working Artists* artists are informed by, and respond to, community input gathered during the AWLCP’s initial stakeholder engagement process.

Working Lands, Working Artists: District 2

Feedback Data



PARTICIPANT REGIONS



PROJECT IMPRESSION



CONCEPT SAMPLE

Concept Support

Jackie's horse-bit sculpture pays homage to the equestrian culture within District 2's community and landscapes, and responds to input collected in the AWLCP stakeholder engagement process.

With the exception of a singular critical comment, all respondents support Jackie's sculpture concept as evidenced by positive suggestions and thoughtful commentary via written responses in both the in-person and online engagement processes.

Working Lands, Working Artists: District 2

Overview



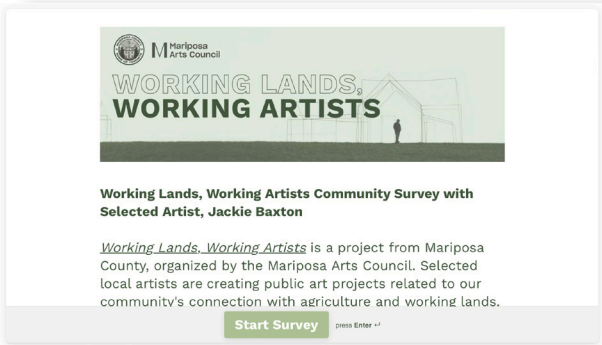
JACKIE BAXTON

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IN-PERSON ENGAGEMENT

9



ONLINE SURVEY

Concept Support

Selected artists are working with the *Working Lands, Working Artists* and AWLCP team and the public to refine their designs. The Arts Council hosts individual online surveys and in-person engagement events for each artists' designs, whereby the public can review and offer constructive feedback. Selected artist **Jackie Baxton** is working with the Mariposa County Planning Department to design a large-scale sculpture situated in Coulterville's township.

In-person engagement was conducted during CoyoteFest, a two-day community festival in September, where Jackie met community members and invited them to view, ask questions, and supply feedback on her current sculpture concept. The accompanying online survey took place October 12-30.

Working Lands, Working Artists: District 2

Outreach

New Sculpture for Coulterville



Jackie Baxton, adjudicated artist for the [Working Lands, Working Artists](#) project is currently seeking community input for her sculpture concept honoring Coulterville's ranching culture and equestrian history. **This survey will be open until October 30.**

[Explore This Concept + Give Feedback](#)

Hey everyone! Anyone can fill this survey out! You do not have to be a resident of Mariposa County

WORKING LANDS, WORKING ARTISTS

About Jackie Baxton

Jackie is a metalsmith, sculptor and taxidermist who owns, lives and works on her ranch in Mariposa County. She creates dimensional artwork, custom pieces and jewelry that speaks towards the experiences, challenges and myths of native and working landscapes.

Artist Feature: Jackie Baxton
Leveraging Art and Design to Support Sustainable Agriculture Planning in Mariposa County

Project Concept & Theme

This large-scale sculptural horse sculpture is a tribute to Coulterville's rich equestrian and cattle ranching history, and pays homage to the profound influence horses have played in development and transformation of Western and indigenous landscapes and cultural narratives in California.

The piece will be made out of reclaimed metals and sourced materials in a welded construction. These materials connect the new with the old and speak toward the previous historical and contemporary influences of horses in agricultural landscapes.

Add Your Input

Jackie's current project is near the final design stage and she is seeking community feedback to help inform her final design. This is an opportunity to share your thoughts and ideas. **Please submit your input details on our website prior to October 30, 2023.**

Visit www.mariposaarts council.org/working-artists to help get Jackie's public art concept...

We had a great time at [CoyoteFest](#) this weekend with Jackie Baxton and our partners at [Mariposa County Planning](#)!

Jackie Baxton, a selected artist for the Working Lands, Working Artists project took the opportunity to share her public art concept with the community. Thanks to everyone who stopped by and offered feedback!

Stay tuned for an online survey about Jackie's project next week or learn more at www.mariposaarts council.org/working-artists... [See more](#)

The next public art concept for Working Lands, Working Artists project is ready for community input!

Selected artist Jackie Baxton is near the final design stages for her large-scale sculpture honoring Coulterville's equestrian culture and ranching history.

Visit www.mariposaarts council.org/working-artists to explore concept details and add your input. This survey will close October 30, 2023. ... [See more](#)

DIGITAL + SOCIAL MEDIA

The Arts Council, Mariposa County, Jackie Baxton and district representatives engaged a wide range of followers through concurrent Instagram and Facebook posts using a suite of graphic material focused on the online survey and CoyoteFest stakeholder engagement opportunities.

The project was also promoted on the Arts Council's 1,747 email-newsletter contacts with survey links and access to project details.

Working Lands, Working Artists: District 2

Outreach

PRESS RELEASE

Submitted by the Mariposa Arts Council, published with press contacts including primary local news sources on October 18, 2023.

MEDIA RELEASE

Mariposa County Arts Council

(209) 966-3155

phillips@mariposaartscouncil.org

www.mariposaartscouncil.org

October 18, 2023

For Immediate Release

The Mariposa County Planning Department and the Mariposa County Arts Council invite the community to submit constructive feedback for a new public art piece from local artist, Jackie Baxton, as a part of the *Working Lands, Working Artists* project.

Baxton - an experienced metalsmith jeweler, sculptor and rancher from Bear Valley - has designed a concept for a large-scale horse-bit sculpture intended to honor the equestrian culture and ranching history of Coulterville, CA. The public may view her concept, see details, and offer constructive feedback to the artist through October 30, 2023. This survey builds on earlier in-person engagement conducted by Baxton during CoyoteFest in September 2023. The online survey and more information about this project can be found at www.mariposaartscouncil.org/working-artists.

Baxton is one of two selected artists for the *Working Lands, Working Artists* project, which engages local artists in the design and installation of public art/creative placemaking projects exploring our community's relationship with agriculture and working landscapes. *Working Lands, Working Artists* aligns with the adopted [Mariposa County Creative Placemaking Strategy](#) and is intended to support recommendations in the Mariposa County Planning Department's [Agriculture and Working Lands Conservation Plan \(AWL-CP\)](#). Selected artist's concepts respond to community input collected during the AWLCP initial stakeholder engagement process, and are being refined under guidance from the Mariposa Arts Council, Planning Department and the AWLCP team.

More information and updates on new *Working Lands, Working Artist* phases will be shared this Fall/Winter 2023. Local artists who are interested in receiving information about similar project opportunities should register themselves on the Mariposa Arts Council's Regional Artist Database, a comprehensive contact list for artists of any medium. To learn more about the Regional Artist Database, visit www.mariposaartscouncil.org/artist-database.

The Arts Council is an incorporated not-for-profit organization created to promote and support all forms of the cultural arts, for all ages, throughout Mariposa County and is supported in part by the County of Mariposa, the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency, and the California Arts Council, a state agency.

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Working Lands, Working Artists: District 2

Responses

Mariposa County Board of Supervisors
5100 Bullion Street/P.O. Box 784
Mariposa, CA 95338

Re: Support for Ms. Baxton’s Working Lands, Working Artist Project

Dear Mariposa County Board of Supervisors:

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for the *Working Lands, Working Artists* proposal to fabricate and install a public art sculpture in Coulterville. I firmly believe in the power of public art to transform spaces, engage citizens, and foster a sense of pride and unity among residents. Such projects not only enhance the aesthetic appeal of our surroundings but also contribute significantly to the cultural and social fabric of our community.

I am particularly impressed with the vision and creativity behind Jackie Baxton’s “Horse Bit” sculpture. The proposed concept not only showcases artistic excellence but also aligns with the unique character and history of the community. It is heartening to see initiatives that celebrate Mariposa county’s local identity and heritage while also embracing innovative and contemporary artistic expressions, especially from local artists.

Public art has the unique ability to bring people together, sparking conversations and encouraging dialogue on important issues. It creates a shared experience that transcends barriers and promotes understanding among diverse groups of individuals. Moreover, public art projects have been shown to boost tourism, stimulate economic growth, and revitalize neighborhoods, making them essential investments in the well-being and prosperity of communities.

I applaud your dedication to enriching our community through the arts. I firmly believe that the *Working Lands, Working Artists* projects will have a lasting, positive impact on the county and its residents. I am looking forward to witnessing the transformative effects of this project and the joy it will undoubtedly bring to the community.

Thank you for your commitment to enhancing the county through public art. I am honored to support this endeavor wholeheartedly and am excited about the positive changes it will inspire.

Warm regards,
Cynthia Cao
Artist

LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Submitted to the Mariposa Arts Council by
Cynthia Cao, October 8, 2023.

Working Lands, Working Artists: District 2

Responses

Mariposa County
5100 Bullion Street
Mariposa, CA 95338

July 21, 2023

Dear County Supervisors and Planning Staff,

I am the Rangeland Program Manager for Sierra Foothill Conservancy. I am writing to express my enthusiasm and support for Jackie Baxton proposed Working Lands, Working Artist project. I had the opportunity to learn about the project from Ms. Baxton at an event in Hornitos on May 5, 2023 and I was very impressed with the artist's technical metalsmithing skills, her deep understanding and profound appreciation of our region's ranching heritage, and the importance of the horse in developing the local agricultural community to what it is today.

I have been working in the cattle business most of my life and currently manage 10,00 acres of grazing lands for Sierra Foothill Conservancy. I have a degree in Agricultural Systems Management from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo and a Master's in Natural Resources Stewardship from Colorado State University. I am also a Certified Rangeland Manager as well as a Certified Professional in Rangeland Management. I offer these credentials to demonstrate how important sustainable agriculture is to me and how much I appreciate this artist's informed and thoughtful proposal to Mariposa County's Working Lands, Working Artists public art project. It's rare for me to encounter public art that reflects my own experience back to me and I am excited by the educational opportunities Ms. Baxton is embedding in the piece that provides opportunities for the general public to learn about our ranching heritage in an effort to contextualize where agriculture in Mariposa is currently.

Centering on the importance of horses in this piece is especially meaningful for me as horses are absolutely critical to ranching. Cattle production was an essential element of the development of Mariposa County and its economic viability. The horse represents an essential tool and lifestyle that enabled such prosperity and social welfare development by the hard-working men and women of the past. The "Bit" is perhaps the most important piece of equipment used to exert control of the horse from the rider. It is a piece of metal that is placed in the horse's mouth and manipulated by the rider through the attached reins. It is how humans have communicated with horses while riding for thousands of years and is a great representation of the relationship between humans and our 4-legged friends. The "Bit" piece of artwork would be a great symbol of the relationship Mariposa County residents have had with the horse over time and the contribution the animals have made to our way of life.

Furthermore, I want to recognize Ms. Baxton's skills as a metalworker. Her understanding and appreciation of hardware clearly comes from her own personal experience as a cattle producer. She recognizes the importance of all the agricultural adjacent tradespeople who, going back generations, have supported the industry with their thoughtful and beautifully made equipment and hardware. It's lovely to see those who directly support the ranching industry honored in this piece.

Finally, I want to express my gratitude to the County of Mariposa for developing a public art project that examines and honors Mariposa's agricultural community and congratulate you for attracting an artist of Ms. Baxton's caliber to the project. I look forward to seeing Ms. Baxton's piece installed in the near future.

Sincerely,

Billy Freeman, Rangeland Program Manager
Sierra Foothill Conservancy

LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Submitted to the Mariposa Arts Council by
Billy Freeman, July 21, 2023.

Supportive Comments

Excited about the Inlaid stone in the bridal area using indigenous material: quartz, Mariposite, etc. The Mariposa/Coulterville letters, and many-spokes wagon wheel. Hopefully it will create a welcoming space and introduction to the community. I think the artist is on the right track. I'm sure in speaking with the public many ideas will be introduced for consideration and input on the existing components reinforced and added to.

I was very touched by the proposal to add C for Coulterville and M for Mariposa within the sculpture design. Branding is an everyday topic of conversation on a ranch, but is not understood widely. I hope to use your sculpture to educate visitors about horse and cattle culture. The Northern Mariposa County History Center has many old brands on display, and with the popularity of the show Yellowstone, the topic has become relevant world wide.

The whole vibe of having a Bit just personally resonates with me. I think she's got it covered!

Everything about it. We don't see enough of these. The color and form resonate with me. It is truly artistic and beautiful. It's well done.

I feel this piece is a perfect representation of Coulterville, its history of horses and cattle ranching. The simplicity and the union of Coulterville and Mariposa County. It's beautiful.

It's a beautiful piece of art. It unifies Coulterville and Mariposa. Very unique and well executed! It's something new.

It resonates with the local community historical value. It is very creative.

I enjoy the country feel of the piece. Excited about the small amount of color.

The joining of hands and how each piece in a unicycle. Love the Turquoise

Excited about the turquoise accents, It's western/ranching.

Love the artwork. Def speaks volumes of horse heritage. It speaks horses - part of the ranching business.

It's stunning, I can't wait to see it.

I like that it is different than traditional statues and I love that it reflects the importance of horse in the area.

I just love the art/Bit. Very well done. Fits the equestrian/ranching in this area.

I just really like it. Love the materials used.

We like that all the materials have connection to this community, as well as to equine history. We like that it is being made with reclaimed materials and locally sourced materials.

It looks great for Coulterville. Love the western history.

It's thoughtfully designed. Any public art in town is good!

I like the overall concept as it relates to the town and the region.

I look forward to seeing the details like the etchings and locally sourced stones

Beautiful work

I really like it.

It looks perfect. <3

Fun! Very fun!

Suggestions and Contributions

It does resonate for me, but I think have more input from actual cattle ranchers, but also maybe the impact of the land. Include the impact of the environment

I would like stones native to this area instead of turquoise, but I think that is already in the plan.

Since the ranching tradition in California goes back to the Spanish Vaqueros, I think this sculpture should be more historical. This bit is too modern. California buckaroo cowboys have used the training techniques of the vaqueros for many years, and they are still in use today. They use a ring snaffle bit along with a bosel or hackamore. After that the spade bit is introduced. After a horse has spent many years in training, the horse is considered finished or what cowboys call, "Up in the bridle." The one shone isn't a traditional snaffle. It is a "dog bone bit", and has two breaks instead of one in the mouth piece. If you're going to use a bit, let's make it a spade bit.

For individuals, like myself, who are entirely uninitiated into horse culture, it will be important to have clear interpretive material for this. I would not know it is a horse bit. If the design could incorporate something visual that reflects a horse it might also help. Horse hair something as part of the design? I'm not sure what that element would be, but it will be helpful to connect the design to a horse. Otherwise, I love, love the whole concept and design.

Maybe change the "M" to a "C"?

Maybe having them rope cattle/calf [conchos]

Critical Comments

The conceptual nature of the work reads as a watered down interpretation of the historical significance of the concept. It's unclear why this specific tool would represent, apparently, multicultural meaning. Formally the work is stagnant and does not provoke meaning beyond the superficial. I want to like this, but it falls into the category of tourist art.

At the request of the County of Mariposa, artists were asked to submit proposals for projects that directly pertain to agriculture and working landscapes. The comment below is important but address a different theme and narrative. These comment provides critical insight into the desires of the community and will help guide the development of future projects for District 2:

Jackie's sculpture doesn't resonate with me because it is not historical. Make it historical.



M Mariposa
Arts Council

Working Lands, Working Artists

Jackie Baxton Stakeholder Engagement Summary | Internal Document

November 8, 2023