

label in a context other than an appellation of origin.

If this proposed viticultural area is established, bottlers who use brand names, including trademarked names, similar to "Southern Oregon" must ensure that their existing products are eligible to use the viticultural area's name as an appellation of origin. For a wine to be eligible, at least 85 percent of the grapes in the wine must have been grown within the viticultural area, and the wine must meet the other requirements of 27 CFR 4.25a(e)(3). If a wine is not eligible for the appellation, the bottler must change the brand name or other label reference and obtain approval of a new label. Different rules apply if a wine in this category has a brand name used on a label approved prior to July 7, 1986. See 27 CFR 4.39(i) for details.

Southern Oregon Petition

General Background

TTB has received a petition from Mr. H. Earl Jones, a winemaker, and Dr. Gregory V. Jones, an associate professor of geography, requesting establishment of a new viticultural area to be called "Southern Oregon." Located between the Coast Range and the Cascade Mountains, the proposed area covers portions of Douglas, Jackson, and Josephine Counties in southwestern Oregon. Beginning about 25 miles south of Eugene, the proposed area stretches about 125 miles south to the California State line and is 60 miles wide at its widest point. The proposed area covers approximately 2,001,430 acres and includes the cities of Sutherlin, Roseburg, Grants Pass, Medford, and Ashland, Oregon.

The proposed Southern Oregon viticultural area encompasses the established Umpqua Valley (27 CFR 9.89) and Rogue Valley (27 CFR 9.132) viticultural areas. A third established viticultural area, Applegate Valley (27 CFR 9.165), is entirely within the Rogue Valley area. As of 2002, there are at least 120 vineyards, totaling over 3,000 acres currently planted, and 17 commercial wineries within the proposed area's boundaries.

According to the petition, the proposed Southern Oregon viticultural area contains a series of high intermountain valleys that share a warm, sunny, arid climate and contain old, complex soils derived from bedrock. These growing conditions, the petition notes, produce a wide range of vinifera grapes in vineyards typically situated in the proposed area's higher elevations. The petition also states that these features make warm climate

viticulture possible in Southern Oregon and distinguish it from surrounding areas such as the Willamette Valley to the north, the Pacific coastal regions to the west, and the region east of the Cascade Mountains.

Viticultural History

According to the petition, grapes have been grown in Southern Oregon since 1852 when Peter Britt operated a winery in Jacksonville, Oregon, that produced wine for local miners. Shortly thereafter, Jesse Applegate planted some 1,200 grape vines in Umpqua, Oregon. Modern day viticulture began in 1959 when Richard Summers founded Hillcrest Vineyard and produced 230 gallons of Riesling. The early 1970s saw the establishment of vineyards in the Umpqua and Rogue valleys by the Henry Estate Winery, Girardet Wine Cellars, and the Valley View Winery. Since then, plantings have continued within the proposed area and now total at least 120 vineyards covering some 3000 acres. As noted above, the proposed area encompasses three established viticultural areas, Umpqua Valley, Rogue Valley and Applegate Valley, and contains 17 commercial wineries.

Name Evidence

The petition asserts the state of Oregon is physically and culturally divided into five main regions: (1) The coastal zone (all lands west of the Coastal Ranges to the Pacific Ocean), (2) the Willamette Valley (the largely urbanized areas extending from Eugene northward to Portland), (3) the Cascades (the spine of Oregon's dominant mountain chain), (4) Eastern Oregon (all lands from the Cascades eastward to Idaho border), and (5) Southern Oregon (the intermountain valleys south of Eugene to the California state line.) Further, the petition suggests that Oregonians are sharply divided by and largely identify with these naturally occurring geographic regions of the State.

As evidence for the proposed area's suggested name, the petition cites "The Encyclopedia of Oregon's" definition of "Southern Oregon" as "extending from the Calapooya Mountains southward to the [California] State line between the Cascades and the Coast Range." The petition also states that geographical references to Southern Oregon are found in multiple business page listings in the telephone books of Douglas, Jackson, and Josephine counties. Telephone books from Klamath Falls and Lakeview, however, indicate that the region east of the proposed area is known as Central Oregon.

Moreover, the petition also claims that wine industry publications such as Wine Business Monthly and Northwest Palate magazines, refer to wine grape production in Jackson, Josephine, and Douglas counties as "Southern Oregon." Finally, the petitioner believes that a "Southern Oregon" appellation will have more relevance to consumers since it better describes the true origin of the area's wines and helps distinguish them from Willamette Valley wines, which, the petition notes, are significantly different.

Boundary Evidence

The proposed Southern Oregon viticultural area encompasses three existing approved viticultural areas (Umpqua Valley, Rogue Valley, and Applegate Valley) and a connecting valley corridor of similar viticultural potential. The boundaries of the three viticultural areas are well established and clearly documented in 27 CFR part 9; there will be no changes in their boundaries.

Within the proposed Southern Oregon area, the only land added to the three established viticultural areas is a 12-by 17-mile north-south connecting corridor in Douglas County joining the Umpqua Valley area with the Rogue Valley area. The petitioner used a series of township and range lines to define the boundaries of the connecting corridor, which is roughly centered on Interstate 5 between Canyonville and Glendale Junction. The petition states that the new connecting corridor has the same physical features as the established areas to its north and south. The corridor includes, for example, a portion of the Cow Creek drainage, a tributary of the South Umpqua River.

The petition notes that the proposed area's boundaries are based on a combination of climate, terrain, and soil factors that contrast with the nearby Willamette Valley, coastal, and Eastern Oregon regions. The viticultural features of the proposed area, the petition adds, allow Southern Oregon to enjoy the unique position of producing both warm and cool climate wine grape varieties of excellent quality.

Growing Conditions

Topography

The petition states that the proposed Southern Oregon area contains a varied, mountainous topography with vineyards typically situated in high mountain valleys. The southern coastal mountains, in particular the Klamaths, form a natural barrier to the proposed area's west. These lofty coastal mountains reach 2,500 feet in elevation