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The term "Ribbon Ridge" figures prominently on the USGS Dundee Quadrangle map submitted with this petition.

Historical or Current Evidence That Supports the Proposed Boundaries

The petitioners assert that the proposed viticultural area is an evident landmass of uniform shape and composition that differs from the hillside sites in the vicinity, which are appropriate for wine grapes in historical, climatic, and geological ways. Ribbon Ridge has been known as a distinct farming district, with its own name and its own mix of crops, ranging from walnuts, prunes, hazelnuts, hay, Christmas trees, timber lots, and cattle for more than a century. Many of these require the warmth and protection of the hillside site for economic distinction. Farmers from Ribbon Ridge are reported to have willingly differentiated themselves from adjoining areas such as Chehalem Valley, Kings Grade, and Rex Hills, even to the extent of establishing a separate school, when others existed in immediately adjacent areas.

Further, the petitioners offer evidence that, geographically, the proposed area is differentiated and separated from adjoining farming regions by the regularity and unaltered nature of the island-like ridge, its position as a mass broken free from other uplifts or larger hillsides, and the clean division its drainage system makes around the full perimeter of the landmass. Specifically, the Chehalem Creek Valley is deep, wide, and severely sloped on Ribbon Ridge's western flank. Where the Creek exits the hills, the Chehalem Valley is wide and flat at the 200-foot level to the south of Ribbon Ridge. Dopp and Ayres Creeks originate on the flank of the Chehalem Mountains underneath Bald Peak, flowing westward to accumulate Ribbon Ridge's drainage, and then diverging to the south and north, achieving the complete segregation of the ridge on the northwest side at an elevation of approximately 400 feet.

Roads have historically been built at the low spots around the ridge, and Dopp, Albertson, and North Valley Roads encircle Ribbon Ridge completely. Ribbon Ridge Road dissects the landmass, running the spine of the Ridge lengthwise, north to south. The petitioners state Ribbon Ridge is clearly defined by both elevation and Yamhill County roads. The proposed viticultural area is defined as the area at 240 feet in elevation or above, enclosed by the 10-mile county road loop.

Vineyard activity began on Ribbon Ridge in 1980 with the planting of Ridgecrest Vineyards. The first commercial vineyard was established in 1982 with the planting of 54 acres of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. Yamhill Valley Vineyards first used grapes from these vineyards in wine production in 1985. It is estimated that between 1,000 and 1,400 acres in the proposed Ribbon Ridge viticultural area are suited to premium wine grape planting. Fourteen vineyards and three wineries are currently located on Ribbon Ridge, with 286 acres currently planted. Four additional vineyards and three additional wineries are currently in the planning stage and should be developed within the next 3 years. Vineyards or winery operations now own in excess of 700 total acres on Ribbon Ridge.

Evidence of Distinctive Geographical Features

The petitioners state that the proposed Ribbon Ridge viticultural area's boundaries are based primarily on a combination of topographic, elevation, and climatic factors that contrast with the surrounding Willamette Valley, Coast Range, and Columbia Gorge.

Physical Features

The petitioners assert that Ribbon Ridge, from the air, appears as an island that has broken off from the higher landmasses that surround it and floats freely above the Chehalem Valley floor. It extends southward from the Chehalem Mountains and rises above the floor of the Valley. Ribbon Ridge Road runs north to south along its spine. Ribbon Ridge is defined on the east and west by the watersheds that fall away from the road in both directions. It is separated from the Chehalem Mountains by Ayres Creek on the north and a creek known locally as Dopp Creek, which runs parallel to Dopp Road on the east and flows south to form the eastern boundary. On the western side of Ribbon Ridge, the Chehalem Creek Valley dramatically separates the proposed area from the Coast Range hillsides that are associated with the Yamhill-Carlton District. There is a gorge-like drop of 300 feet or more into the narrow quarter-mile ravine that widens at the foot of Ribbon Ridge into the broad, flat Chehalem Valley dividing the Chehalem Mountains from the Red Hills of Dundee area. This feature, more than any other, shows the separate nature of Ribbon Ridge's formation as an uplifted landmass of unique origin.

Soil

The petitioners state that the soils of Ribbon Ridge are relatively uniform, all

being marine sedimentary and fine-textured (mainly Willakenzie series) at plantable elevations, without significant alterations from slides and erosion. Specifically, Ribbon Ridge is a distinct, natural, geological formation of eastward-tilted marine sedimentary strata dated to the upper Eocene. The Keasey Formation, exposed on the western side of the Ridge, is laminated to massive, pale gray, tuffaceous mudstone, to fine tuffaceous sandstone. The overlying Pittsburgh Bluffs Formation, exposed in the central and eastern side of the Ridge, is a massive to thick-bedded gray to tan, weathering, feldpathic litharenite with tuffaceous mudstone and sandstone. The petitioners assert that within the region Ribbon Ridge is unusual in the presence of only these two geological strata and the intact nature of these formations.

Further, they contend that, because the ridge is ancient and stable, the soils from these fine sedimentary parent materials are well weathered and consequently are, on average, deeper in profile and more finely structured than soils in surrounding areas.

As a consequence of its geological history, the soils of Ribbon Ridge are distinct from those of adjacent vineyards in several significant ways. Unlike the Chehalem Mountains to the north and east, the soils of ribbon Ridge are entirely derived from marine sedimentary parent materials. They are distinctly different from the alluvial sedimentary soils that constitute, in part or entirely, areas to the east of Ribbon Ridge or to the south in the Chehalem Valley flood plain. They are different from the adjacent volcanic soils in the proposed Chehalem Mountains and Red Hills of Dundee American viticultural areas. The petitioners also offered evidence that the soils of Ribbon Ridge are related but distinctly different from the marine sedimentary hillsides (mainly Willakenzie and Peavine Series) to the west of Chehalem Creek Gorge in the proposed Yamhill-Carlton area in that they are younger, finer, and more uniform due to finer parent materials of sandstone, siltstone, and mudstone.

Elevation

The petitioners state the proposed Ribbon Ridge viticultural area extends southward from the Chehalem Mountains and rises above the floor of the Chehalem Valley from approximately 200 feet to an elevation of 683 feet. The proposed area is defined as 240 feet in elevation or higher and is enclosed by a 9.85-mile county road loop. The area contains south-sloped plantings at elevations high enough to avoid valley soils (over 240 feet) but