



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

701 OCEAN STREET - 4TH FLOOR, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060
(831) 454-2580 FAX: (831) 454-2131 TDD: (831) 454-2123

TOM BURNS, PLANNING DIRECTOR

February 11, 2008

Planning Commission
County of Santa Cruz
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Agenda Date: March 26, 2008

APN: 105-511-01

Application: 07-0510

Item 8

Subject: A public hearing to consider a proposal to rezone a single lot of record from the Special Use (SU) zone district to the Timber Production (TP) zone district.

Members of the Commission:

On September 11, 2007, the County Planning Department accepted this application for a rezoning to Timber Production (TP). This is a proposal to rezone a 9.9 acre parcel from the Special Use (SU) zone district to the Timber Production (TP) designation. The uses on the property consist of vacant rural acreage.

Background

This project qualifies for a rezoning under California Government Code Section 51113. This section allows a property owner to petition the County to rezone land to the TP zone. The requirements for this type of rezoning are listed in Government Code section 51113(c)¹. The County may not place any additional requirements on this petition to rezone the property to TP. County Code Section 13.10.375(c) – “Zoning to the TP District” implements Government Code section 51113 and specifies the six criteria which must be met in order to rezone to TP.

¹ c) On or before March 1, 1977, the board or council by ordinance shall adopt a list of criteria required to be met by parcels being considered for zoning as timberland production under this section. The criteria shall not impose any requirements in addition to those listed in this subdivision and in subdivision (d). The following shall be included in the criteria:

- (1) A map shall be prepared showing the legal description or the assessor's parcel number of the property desired to be zoned.
- (2) A plan for forest management shall be prepared or approved as to content, for the property by a registered professional forester. The plan shall provide for the eventual harvest of timber within a reasonable period of time, as determined by the preparer of the plan.
- (3) (A) The parcel shall currently meet the timber stocking standards as set forth in Section 4561 of the Public Resources Code and the forest practice rules adopted by the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection for the district in which the parcel is located, or the owner shall sign an agreement with the board or council to meet those stocking standards and forest practice rules by the fifth anniversary of the signing of the agreement. If the parcel is subsequently zoned as timberland production under subdivision (a), failure to meet the stocking standards and forest practice rules within this time period provides the board or council with a ground for rezoning of the parcel pursuant to Section 51121.
(B) Upon the fifth anniversary of the signing of an agreement, the board shall determine whether the parcel meets the timber stocking standards in effect on the date that the agreement was signed.
Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 4 (commencing with Section 51130), if the parcel fails to meet the timber stocking standards, the board or council shall immediately rezone the parcel and specify a new zone for the parcel, which is in conformance with the county general plan and whose primary use is other than timberland.
- (4) The parcel shall be timberland, as defined in subdivision (f) of Section 51104.
- (5) The parcel shall be in compliance with the compatible use ordinance adopted by the board or council pursuant to Section 51111.
- (d) The criteria required by subdivision (c) may also include any or all of the following:
 - (1) The land area concerned shall be in the ownership of one person, as defined in Section 38106 of the Revenue and Taxation Code, and shall be comprised of single or contiguous parcels of a certain number of acres, not to exceed 80 acres.
 - (2) The land shall be a certain site quality class or higher under Section 434 of the Revenue and Taxation Code, except that the parcel shall not be required to be of the two highest site quality classes.

In accordance with County Code Section 13.10.375(c), the project meets the following six criteria for rezoning to Timber Production:

1. A map has been submitted with the legal description or assessor's parcel number of the property to be rezoned.
2. A Timber Management Plan, undated, prepared by a registered professional forester has been submitted for the property (Exhibit E).
3. The parcel currently meets the timber stocking standards as set forth in Section 4561 of the Public Resources Code and the Forest Practice Rules for the district in which the parcel is located (see Exhibit E).
4. The parcel is timberland, as the entire parcel is capable of producing a minimum of 15 cubic feet of timber per acre annually and is almost entirely located within a mapped Timber Resource area.
5. The uses on the parcel are in compliance with the Timber Production Zone uses set forth in Section 13.10.372.
6. The land area to be rezoned is in the ownership of one person, as defined in Section 38106 of the Revenue and Taxation Code, and is comprised of at least five acres in area.

This project qualifies for a statutory exemption (Exhibit D) in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act and the County Environmental Review Guidelines (Article 17, Section 1703).

Conclusion

All of the criteria have been met for rezoning this parcel to the Timber Production zoning designation. All required findings can be made to approve this application and the rezoning is consistent with the General Plan policies and land use designations.

Recommendation

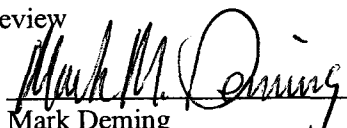
Staff recommends that your Commission adopt the attached Resolution (Exhibit A), sending a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors for approval of Application No. 07-0510 based on the attached findings (Exhibit B).

EXHIBITS

- A. Planning Commission Resolution, with Ordinance/ Findings
- B. APN Map
- C. Location, Current Zoning and General Plan Designation Maps
- D. Notice of Exemption from CEQA
- E. Timber Management Plan by Gary Paul, RPF #1829, dated December 7, 2007.

Maria Porcila Perez
Project Planner
Development Review

Reviewed By:


Mark Deming
Assistant Planning Director

BEFORE THE PLANNING COMMISSION
OF THE COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

RESOLUTION NO. _____

On the motion of Commissioner
duly seconded by Commissioner
the following Resolution is adopted:

PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION
SENDING RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
ON PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE ZONING ORDINANCE

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has held a public hearing on Application No. 07-0510, involving property located at the end of a private right-of-way , approximately 500 feet south of the intersection with Fern Flat Road, and the Planning Commission has considered the proposed rezoning, all testimony and evidence received at the public hearing, and the attached staff report.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Planning Commission recommends that the Board of Supervisors adopt the attached ordinance amending the Zoning Ordinance by changing property from the Special Use (SU) zone district to the Timber Production zone district.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Planning Commission makes findings on the proposed rezoning as contained in the Report to the Planning Commission.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Planning Commission of the County of Santa Cruz, State of California, this _____ day of _____, 2008, by the following vote:

AYES: COMMISSIONERS
NOES: COMMISSIONERS
ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS
ABSTAIN: COMMISSIONERS

Chairperson

ATTEST: _____
MARK DEMING, Secretary

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

COUNTY COUNSEL

ORDINANCE NO. _____

**ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 13
OF THE SANTA CRUZ COUNTY CODE
CHANGING FROM ONE ZONE DISTRICT TO ANOTHER**

The Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Cruz ordains as follows:

SECTION I

The Board of Supervisors finds that the public convenience, necessity and general welfare require the amendment of the County Zoning Regulations to implement the policies of the County General Plan and Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan regarding the timber resource property located at the end of a private right-of-way, approximately 500 feet south of the intersection with Fern Flat Road; finds that the zoning to be established herein is consistent with all elements of the Santa Cruz County General Plan and the Santa Cruz County Code, as modified by the *Big Creek* decision; and finds and certifies that the project is subject to a statutory exemption under the California Environmental Quality Act.

SECTION II

The Board of Supervisors hereby adopts the Zoning Plan Amendment as described in Section III, and adopts the findings in support thereof without modification as set forth below:

1. The proposed zone district will allow a density of development and types of uses which are consistent with the objectives and land use designations of the adopted General Plan; and
1. The proposed zone district is appropriate for the level of utilities and community services available to the land; and
2. The character of development in the area where the land is located has changed or is changing to such a degree that the public interest will be better served by a different zone district; and
3. The property meets the requirements of Government Code section 51113 or 51113.5 and County Code Section 13.10.375(c).

SECTION III

Chapter 13.10 - Zoning Regulations of the Santa Cruz County Code is hereby amended by amending Section 13.10.210 - Zoning Plan to change the following properties from the existing zone district to the new zone district as follows:

<u>Assessor's Parcel Number</u>	<u>Existing Zone District</u>	<u>New Zone District</u>
105-511-01	Special Use (SU)	TP

SECTION IV

This ordinance shall take effect on the 31st day after the date of final passage.

PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS ____ day of _____ 2008, by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Cruz by the following vote:

AYES: SUPERVISORS
NOES: SUPERVISORS
ABSENT: SUPERVISORS
ABSTAIN: SUPERVISORS

Chairman of the Board of Supervisors

ATTEST: _____
Clerk of the Board

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Assistant County Counsel

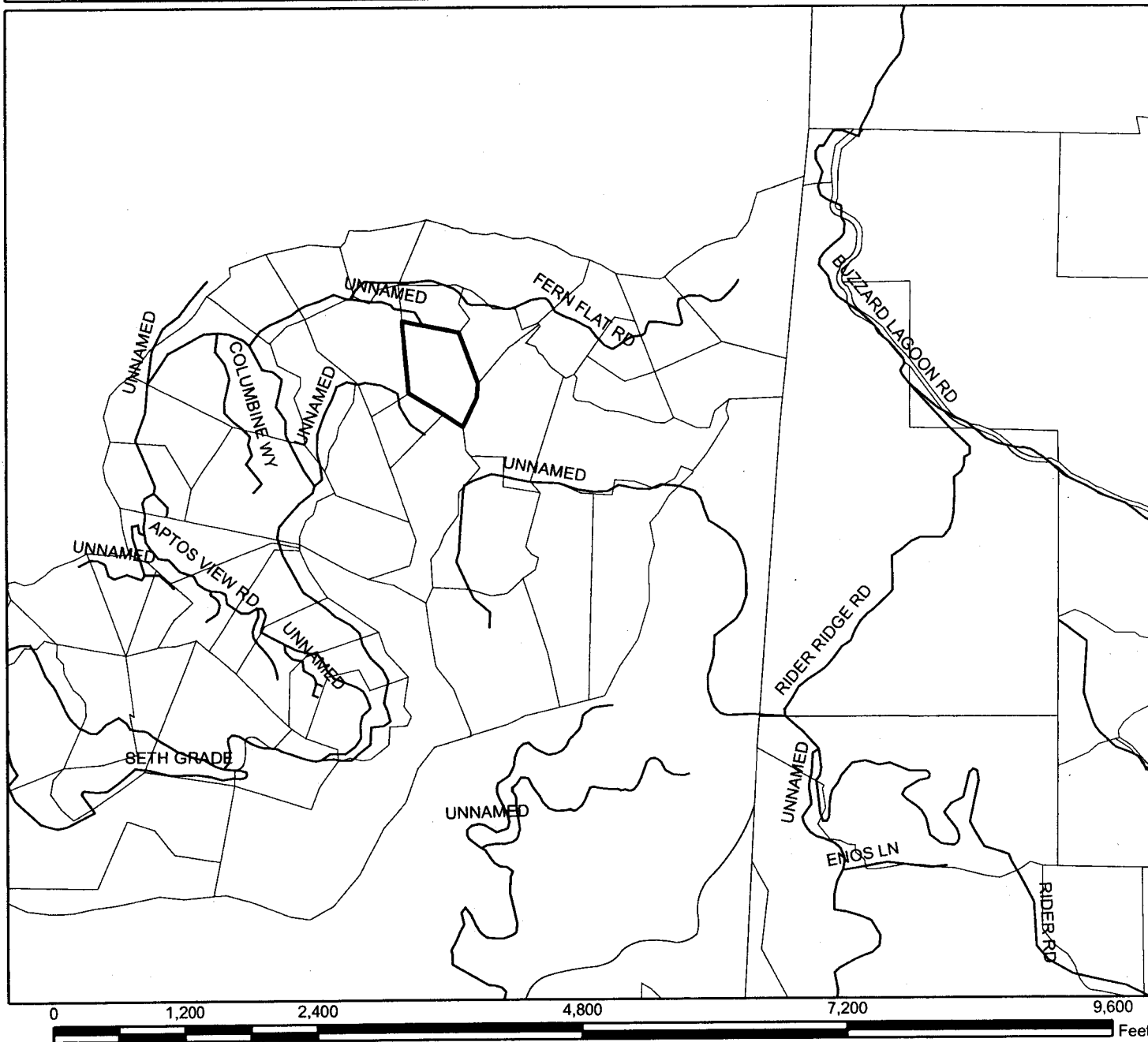
Exhibit: Rezoning Map

DISTRIBUTION: County Counsel
Planning
Assessor
County




GIS

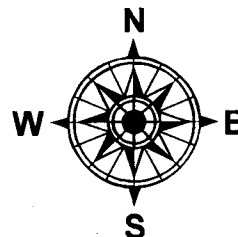


Location Map



LEGEND

-  APN: 105-511-01
-  Assessors Parcels
-  Streets

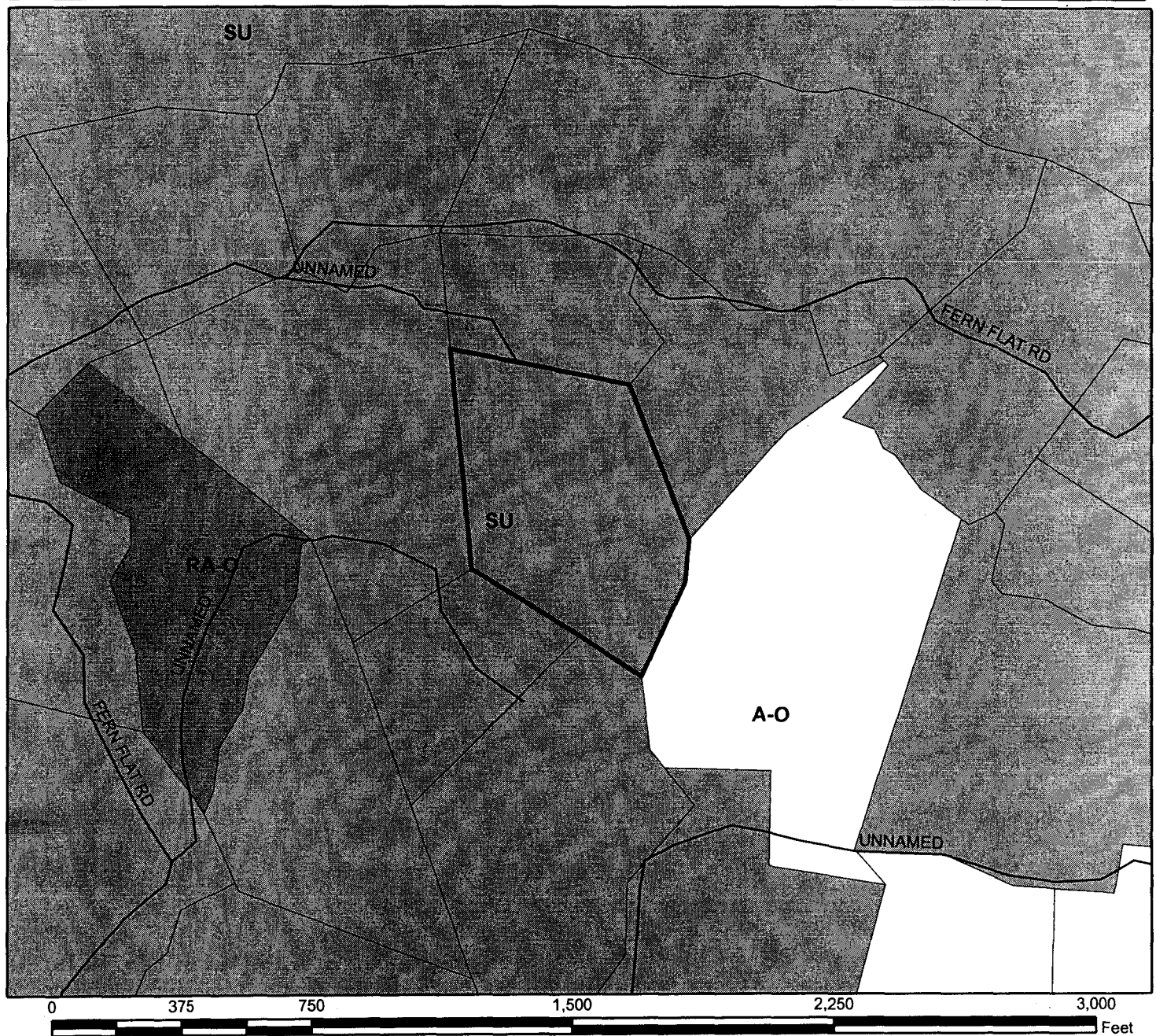


Map created by
County of Santa Cruz
Planning Department
August 2007






EXHIBIT C

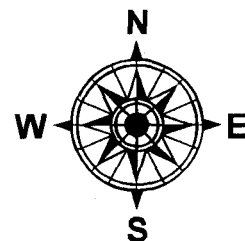


Zoning Map



LEGEND

-  APN: 105-511-01
-  Assessors Parcels
-  Streets
-  AGRICULTURE RESIDENTIAL
-  SPECIAL USE

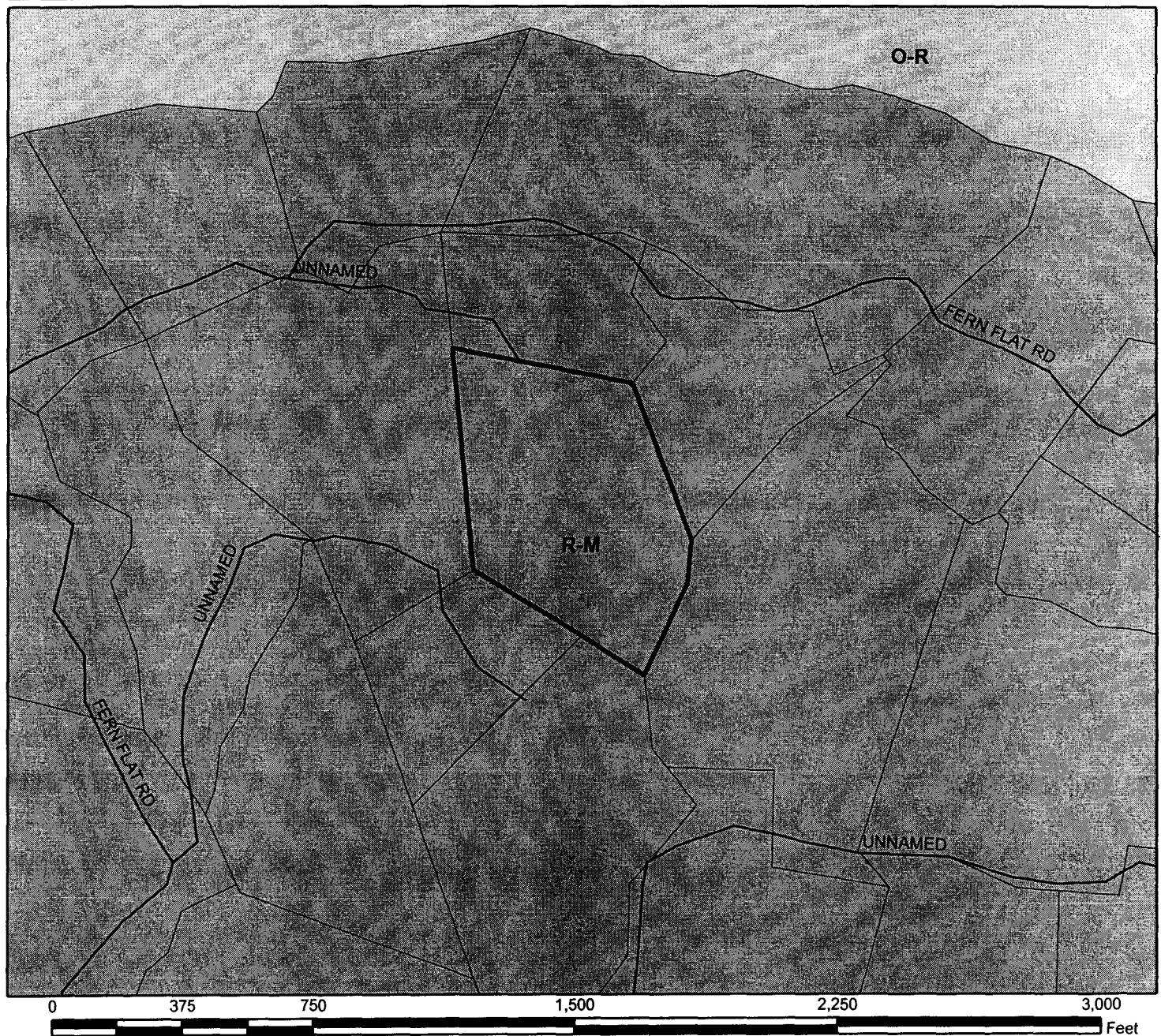


Map created by
County of Santa Cruz
Planning Department
August 2007






EXHIBIT C

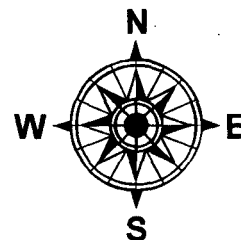


General Plan Designation Map



LEGEND

-  APN: 105-511-01
-  Assessors Parcels
-  Streets
-  Parks and Recreation
-  Residential-Mountain



Map created by
County of Santa Cruz
Planning Department
August 2007

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

The Santa Cruz County Planning Department has reviewed the project described below and has determined that it is exempt from the provisions of CEQA as specified in Sections 15061 - 15332 of CEQA for the reason(s) which have been specified in this document.

Application Number: 07-0510

Assessor Parcel Number: 105-511-01

Project Location: Property located at the end of a private right-of-way, approximately 500 feet south of the intersection with Fern Flat Road.

Project Description: Rezone a single parcel from the Special Use (SU) zone districts to the Timber Production (TP) zone district.

Person or Agency Proposing Project: Gary Paul

Contact Phone Number: (831) 440-9125

- A. ☐ The proposed activity is not a project under CEQA Guidelines Section 15378.
- B. ☐ The proposed activity is not subject to CEQA as specified under CEQA Guidelines Section 15060 (c).
- C. ☐ **Ministerial Project** involving only the use of fixed standards or objective measurements without personal judgment.
- D. ☒ **Statutory Exemption** other than a Ministerial Project (CEQA Guidelines Section 15260 to 15285). [Section 1703]

In addition, none of the conditions described in Section 15300.2 apply to this project.

Maria Porcila Perez, Project Planner

Date: _____

Timber Management Plan

**Lands of Pedersen
Fern Flat Road
Santa Cruz County**

**APN# 105-511-01
Portion of Section 27, 28
Township 10 South
Range 1 East
Mount Diablo Base & Meridian**

**Report Prepared By
Gary Paul, Consulting Forester
December 7, 2007**

PREFACE

In October 2007 Gary Paul, Consulting Forester was commissioned by Bill Pedersen to prepare a Timber Management Plan for APN #105-511-01. The county assessor lists the parcel as totaling 9.9 acres in size. Mr. Pedersen would like to rezone the parcel to Timber Production and the TMP will be part of an application packet submitted to the County of Santa Cruz. The management plan incorporates field work, currently available resource data and information from a previous timber harvest plan.

GENERAL PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

The parcel is located approximately five miles northeast of Aptos near the end of Fern Flat Road. The property is located in a broad bowl in the upper portion of the Valencia Creek Watershed. The property generally slopes to the south with draws formed by seasonal watercourses near the eastern and western boundaries. The terrain on the site ranges from gentle to steep.

Elevation ranges from 1,200 feet in the eastern draw to 1,360 feet along the northern property boundary. The legal description of the parcel is Township 10 South, Range 1 East, portion of sections 27, 28. Timber site classification throughout the timbered portions of the property is site III.

The entire property is comprised of coniferous forest. As the property has been selectively harvested twice in the last 25 years, the forest is comprised of well-spaced, medium sized trees. Coastal redwood is the dominant tree type of the forest, with lesser amounts of Douglas-fir. As is typical with these species, the redwoods tend to grow in groves while the Douglas-fir trees grow as scattered individuals or in small groups. Hardwood species of tanoak, madrone and coastal live oak are interspersed through the stand, primarily as an intermediate species. Understory vegetation is typical for redwood forests in the Santa Cruz Mountains and includes tanoak seedlings, bracken fern, sword fern, California blackberry, poison oak, hazel, bunch grasses and clover.

The site is underlain by the Lompico Variant loam. This moderately deep, well-drained soil is on terraces and mountains, mainly on ridges and in small, bench-like areas. It formed in residuum derived from sandstone, shale, or mudstone. Permeability of this Lompico soil is slow. Effective rooting depth is 20 to 40 inches. Runoff is medium or rapid, and the hazard of erosion is moderate or high. This soil is well suited to the production of Douglas fir and redwood.

TIMBER HARVEST HISTORY

The old-growth redwood logging in the Santa Cruz area, including this property, occurred approximately 110 years ago. As was common throughout the area, this clear-cut logging was often followed by fire, usually intentionally set to burn bark and slash. Fire scars on the old-growth stumps are evidence of this fire activity. The property was next harvested in 1984. Under this harvest, approximately 40-50% of the larger second growth redwood and Douglas-fir trees were selectively cut. The property was then harvested in 1999. Again, this selective harvest removed approximately 40-50% of the larger conifer trees.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND GOALS

Once the property is rezoned, Mr. Pedersen intends to continue to manage the forest land for high quality forest products, while maintaining the related values of aesthetics and wildlife. As the property was last harvested about eight years ago, the next harvest cannot occur for at least two years. Although State law allows for a harvest every 10 years, due to the small size of the timbered area it is recommended that future harvesting be spaced at a 15-20 year interval to maximize the volume removed in each harvest, and to minimize neighborhood impacts. Future harvests should focus on the following objectives:

1. Prescribe and implement a forest improvement program to improve stocking, increase tree vigor and maximize growth.
2. Maintain a healthy and vigorous forest of well-spaced trees growing at the highest rates feasible considering the other values of the forest.
3. Maintain a high degree of aesthetic consideration during all aspects of forest management.
4. Promote wildlife habitat as part of continuing forest management.

RECOMMENDED LOGGING SYSTEM

The recommended logging system for this property is to use ground based logging equipment such as tractors and log skidders. Most of the road and trail system is already in place from the previous harvests.

PRESENT AND FUTURE STAND CONDITIONS

In September of 2007 an 12% timber inventory was conducted on the property to determine conifer volume per acre, species composition, basal area, stocking levels and stand growth. The stand data gathered from this inventory, combined with on-site observations made by the professional forester preparing this report, show that the 9.9 acres of coniferous forest have the following approximate stand conditions:*

Species Composition	92% second growth redwood 8% Douglas-fir
Basal Area	117 square feet per acre
Gross volume/acre (redwood)	18,500 board feet
Gross volume/acre (Douglas-fir)	1,600 board feet
Gross Overall property volume	199,000 board feet

The volume per acre and overall property volume stated previously are gross volumes. In general, the net volume for redwood will be about 6% less due to fire scar, rot and other minor defects in the standing timber. The defect in the Douglas-fir is higher due to the presence of conk in some of the butt logs and is estimated at 12%. With these factors in mind the overall net conifer volume on the property is approximately 186,100 board feet.

Increment boring data gathered during the timber inventory combined with general tree growth rates in the Santa Cruz Mountains indicate that the conifer component of the forest is growing at an approximate rate of 4.1% per year. This high growth rate is due to the past selective harvesting creating improved growing conditions for the remaining trees. A growth rate of 4.1% per year equates to an annual increase in the conifer resource of 8,160 board feet over the entire property. Converting this figure to cubic feet gives a current growth rate of 680 cubic feet over the entire property, or 69 cubic feet per acre per year. This exceeds the required average of 15 cubic feet per acre per year to classify a property as timberland.

**Limitation: This data is based on a field sample and an extrapolated growth rate for the previous ten years. This data should only be used as a guide for management purposes, and should not be extended or taken out of context for other purposes.*

OTHER PROPERTY USES

The property is currently used as watershed and wildlife habitat.

CONCLUSION

The property is well suited for timber management into the future. The property has been selectively for the past 25 years and the forest resource is currently healthy and experiencing a high growth rate consistent with managed forests. Mr. Pedersen has indicated that he wants to continue to manage the timber resource and stand conditions warrant another harvest in the next ten years.

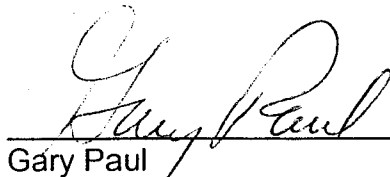
TIMBER STOCKING: To rezone a property to the "Timber Production" zoning a property must meet the timber stocking standards set forth in Section 4561 of the Public Resources Code. Section 4561 states in part that "The average residual basal area, measured in stems one inch or larger in diameter...in areas which the registered professional forester has determined are site II classification or lower, the minimum average residual basal area shall be 50 square feet per acre. Rock outcroppings and other areas not normally bearing timber shall not be considered as

requiring stocking." The average residual conifer basal area in the timbered portions of the property is 117 square feet and therefore meets the stocking standards.

TIMBERLAND: To rezone a property to the "Timber Production" zoning a property must meet the definition of timberland. Section 51104 of the California Code states that "Timberland means privately owned land...capable of growing an average annual volume of wood fiber of at least 15 cubic feet per acre." The property proposed for rezoning is capable of growing an annual average volume of coniferous wood fiber of 69 cubic feet per acre and therefore meets the definition of timberland.

COMPATIBLE USE: Existing infrastructure on the properties does not significantly detract from the use of the property for, or inhibit, growing and harvesting timber.

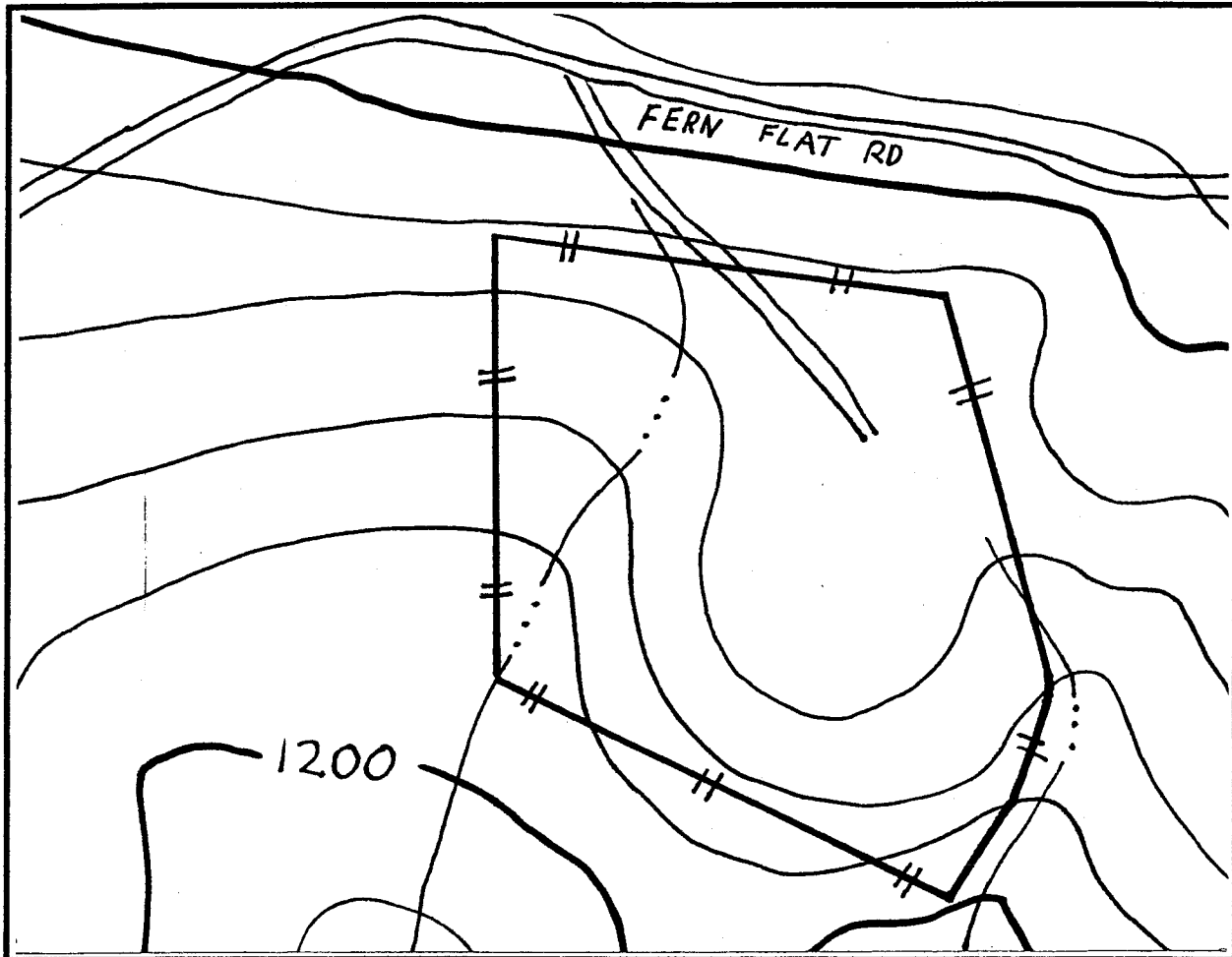
Timber Management Plan Prepared By:







Gary Paul
Registered Professional Forester #1829

12-7-07
Date

LANDS OF PEDERSEN
PLAN AREA MAP
 SANTA CRUZ COUNTY
 T10S, R1E, SEC. 27, 28 MDB&M



LEGEND

PROPERTY BOUNDARY 
 FOREST BOUNDARY 
 PERMANENT ROAD 
 WATERCOURSE 

SCALE: 1 INCH = 250

CONTOUR INTERVAL = 40 FEET

