



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 12, 2008

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

Agenda Date: April 9, 2008

APN: 096-201-29

Application: 07-0578

Item #: 14

Time: After 9 AM

Subject: A public hearing to consider a proposal to rezone one parcel from the Special Use (SU) zone district to the Timber Production (TP) zone district.

Members of the Commission:

On September 20, 2007, the County Planning Department accepted this application for a rezoning to Timber Production (TP). This is a proposal to rezone 22.2 acres from the Special Use (SU) zone district to the Timber Production (TP) zone district. The uses on the property consist of a residence.

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 the 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. 07-0578 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 Joseph Culver, RPF #2674, dated October 8, 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. 07-0578, involving property located at the intersection of Soquel San Jose Road and Summit 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 (TP) 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.

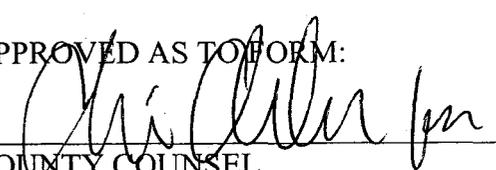
PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Planning Commission of the County of Santa Cruz, State of California, this _____ day of _____, 2008, by the following vote:

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 intersection of Soquel San Jose Road and Summit 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>
096-201-29	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

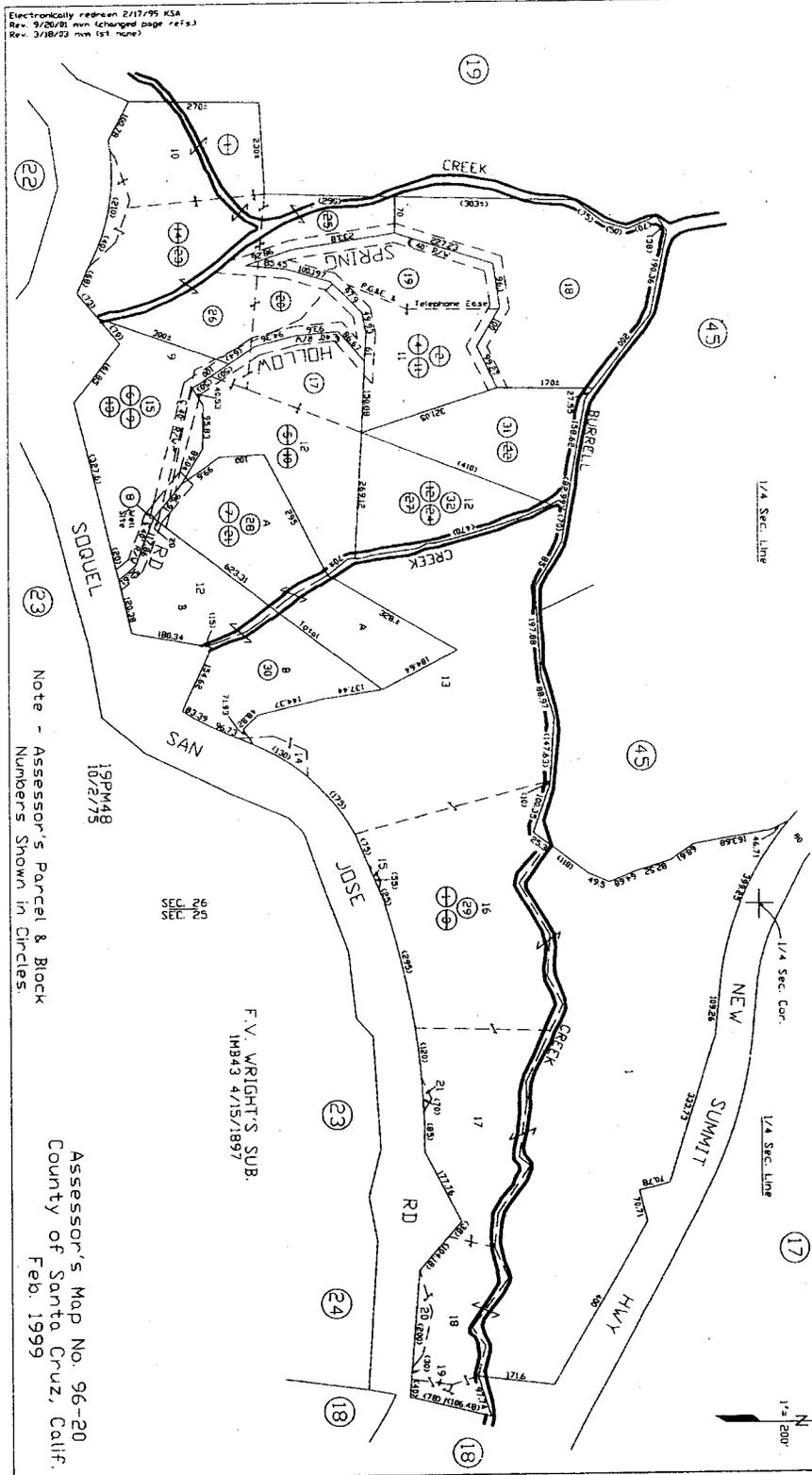
Exhibit: Rezoning Map

DISTRIBUTION: County Counsel
Planning
Assessor
County
GIS

FOR TAX PURPOSES ONLY
 THE ASSessor MAKES NO GUARANTEE AS TO ACCURACY AND ASSUMES NO LIABILITY FOR ANY ERRORS OR OMISSIONS.
 © COPYRIGHT SANTA CRUZ COUNTY ASSESSOR 1999

SOQUEL AUGMENTATION RANCHO
 PDR. S.E. 1/4, SEC. 26 & M.
 PDR. S/W 1/4, SEC. 25, 19S., R1W., M.D.B. & M.

Tax Area Code
 79-032
 96-20



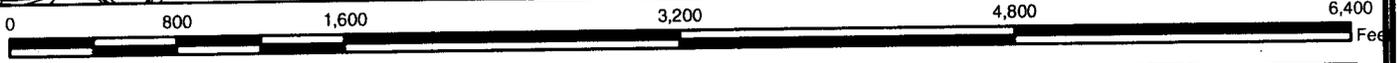
Note - Assessor's Parcel & Block Numbers Shown in Circles.

Assessor's Map No. 96-20
 County of Santa Cruz, Calif.
 Feb. 1999

Electronically redrawn 2/17/99 KSA
 Rev. 9/26/95 mm (changed page refs)
 Rev. 3/18/92 mm (st none)

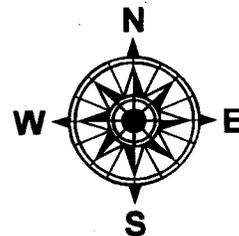


Location Map



LEGEND

-  APN: 096-201-29
-  Assessors Parcels
-  Streets

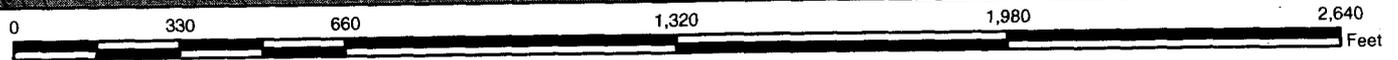
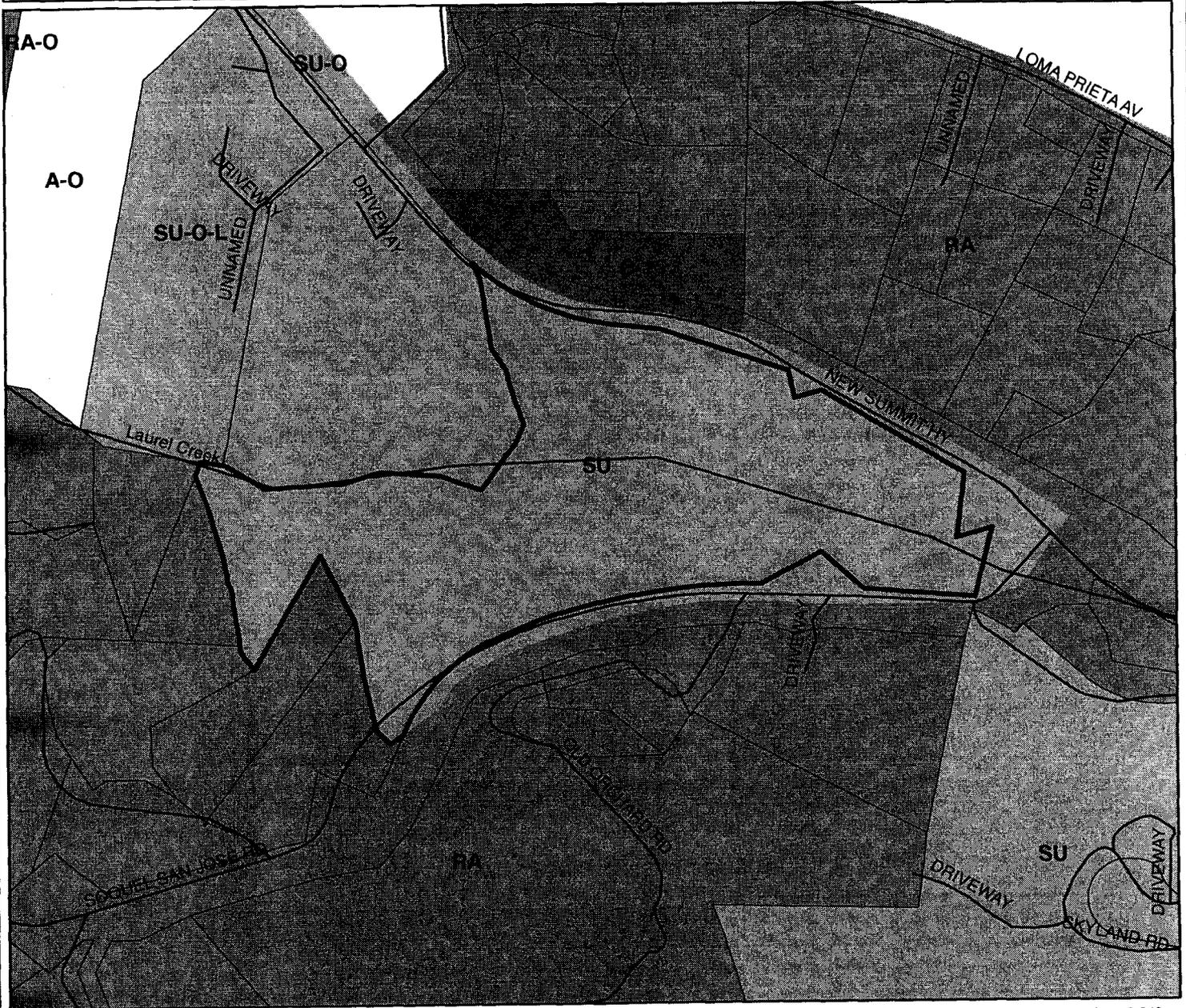


Map created by
 County of Santa Cruz
 Planning Department
 August 2007

EXHIBIT C

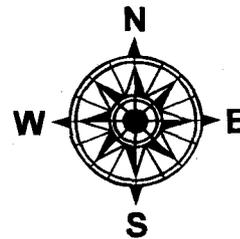


Zoning Map



LEGEND

- APN: 096-201-29
- Assessors Parcels
- Streets
- STREAMTYPE**
- PERENNIAL
- INTERMITTENT
- AGRICULTURE
- AGRICULTURE RESIDENTIAL
- SPECIAL USE
- COMMERCIAL-NEIGHBORHOOD

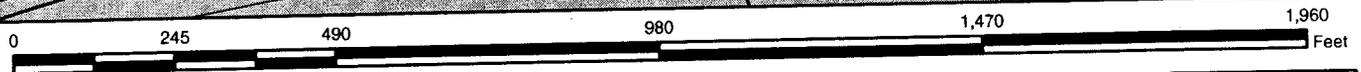
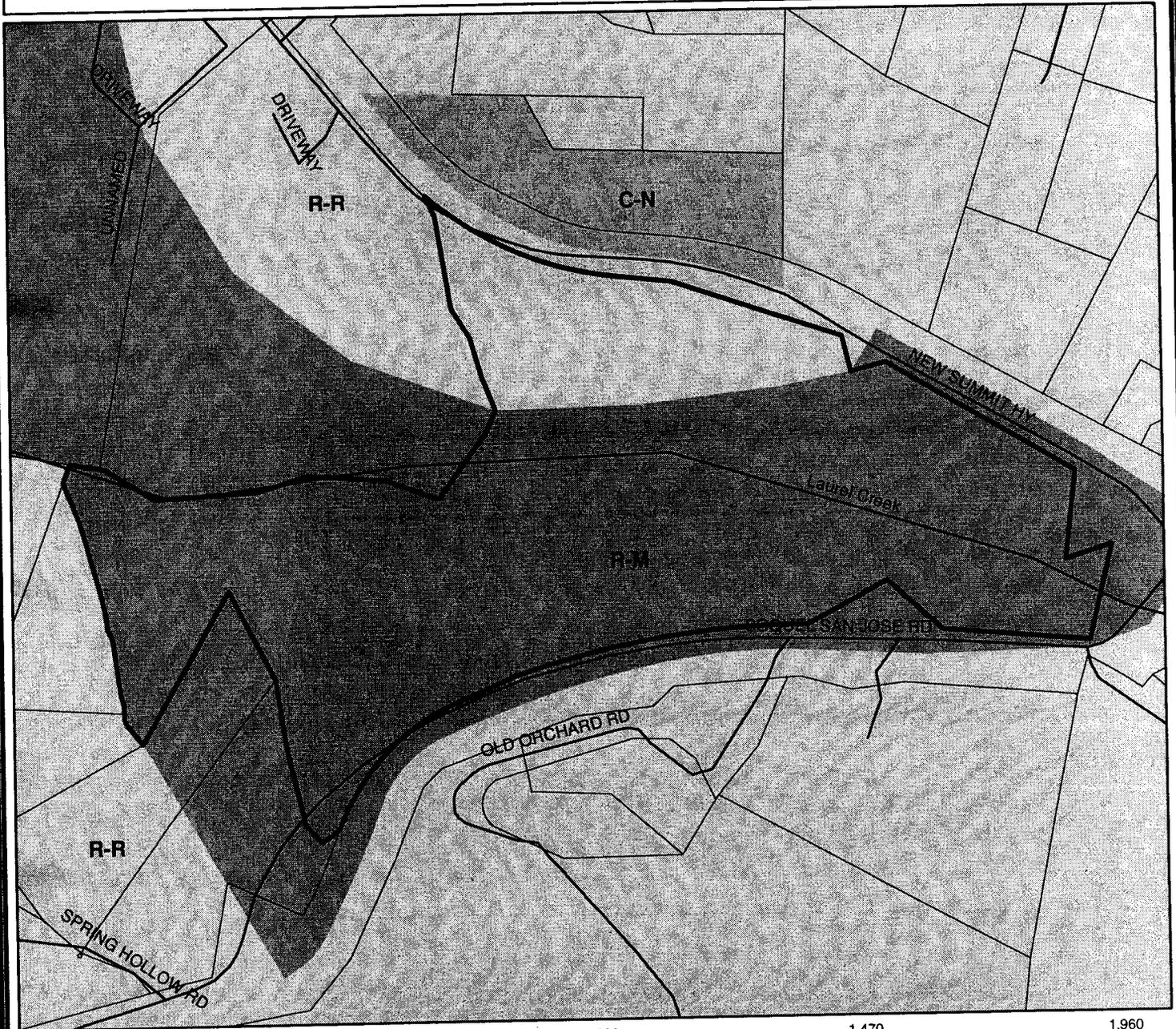


Map created by
 County of Santa Cruz
 Planning Department
 August 2007

EXHIBIT C



General Plan Designation Map



LEGEND

APN: 096-201-29

Assessors Parcels

Streets

STREAMTYPE

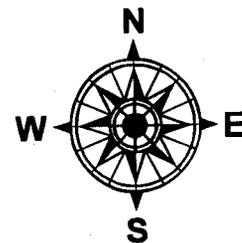
PERENNIAL

INTERMITTENT

Residential-Mountain

Commercial-Neighborhood

Residential-Rural



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: 07-0578

Assessor Parcel Number: 096-201-29

Project Location: Property located at the intersection of Soquel San Jose Road and Summit Road

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

Person or Agency Proposing Project: Scott & Julie Starling

Contact Phone Number: (408) 353-5876

- 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 Starling
Soquel San Jose Road
Santa Cruz County**

**APN# 096-201-29
Portion of Section 25, 26
Township 9 South
Range 1 West
Mount Diablo Base & Meridian**

**Report Prepared By
Joseph Culver, Consulting Forester
October 8, 2007**

PREFACE

In September 2007, Joseph Culver, Consulting Forester, was commissioned by Julie Starling to prepare a Timber Management Plan for APN# 096-201-29. The county assessor lists the parcel as 22.2 acres in size. Ms. Starling 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 and currently available resource data.

GENERAL PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

The property is located in the "Summit Area" of Santa Cruz County approximately three miles east of Highway 17. The property is located in the Laurel Creek Watershed and is topographically described as a west trending, steeply sloped valley. The property is bordered to the north by Summit Road and to the east and south by Soquel San Jose Road. Deeply incised Laurel Creek flows in a westerly direction, effectively dividing the property to the north and south.

Elevation ranges from 1,360 feet along Laurel Creek to 1,980 feet near Summit Road. The legal description of the parcel is Township 9 South, Range 1 West, portion of section 25 and 26. Timber site classification throughout the timbered portions of the property is site III.

Approximately 18 acres of the property is comprised of coniferous forest. This forest contains primarily second growth redwoods and Douglas-fir as the dominant overstory species. As is typical with these species, the redwoods tend to grow in clumps while individual Douglas-firs are scattered through the property. Hardwood species of tanoak, coastal live oak, madrone and California bay are interspersed throughout the forest, primarily as an intermediate species.

The redwood tends to grow best on the north facing slope south of Laurel Creek. The coniferous forest north of Laurel Creek has a much higher component of Douglas-fir and the redwood is primarily relegated to areas near the creek. Hardwood species primarily consist of coastal live oak and bay with scattered madrone and make up a higher percentage of the forest cover north of Laurel Creek.

Understory species throughout the forest are typical of conifer forests in the Santa Cruz Mountains and include tanoak seedlings, poison oak, thimbleberry, sword fern, California blackberry, hazel, clover, and French broom in disturbed areas.

The remaining 4.2 acres of the property is comprised of hardwood stands, brush fields and openings with no forest cover.

Approximately four acres of the coniferous forest near Soquel San Jose Road is underlain by the Lompico-Felton complex. Permeability of the Lompico soil is moderate and effective rooting depth is 20 to 40 inches. Runoff is medium or rapid, and the hazard of erosion is moderate or high. The Felton soil is deep and well drained and formed in residuum derived from sandstone, shale, siltstone, or schist. Permeability of the Felton soil is moderately slow and effective rooting depth is 40 to 72 inches. These soils are well suited to the production of redwood and Douglas fir.

The remainder of the coniferous forest is underlain by the Ben Lomond-Felton complex. The Ben Lomond and Felton soils are deep and well drained. Ben Lomond soils formed in residuum derived from sandstone or granitic rock and Felton formed from sandstone, shale, schist, or silt stone. Permeability of the Ben Lomond soil is moderately rapid while permeability of the Felton soil is moderately slow. Effective rooting depth of the complex is 40-70 inches. Runoff is rapid, and the hazard of erosion is high. According to the Natural Resources Conservation Service, these soils are well suited to the production of timber.

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 1999. Under this harvest, approximately 50% of the larger second growth redwood and Douglas-fir trees were selectively harvested.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND GOALS

Once the property is rezoned, Ms. Starling intends to manage the forest land for high quality forest products, while enhancing the related values of aesthetics and wildlife. As the previous selective harvest occurred eight years ago, the next harvest should occur within the next ten to fifteen 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. Maintain 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 harvest.

PRESENT AND FUTURE STAND CONDITIONS

In October of 2007 a 6% timber inventory was conducted on the property to determine conifer volume per acre, species composition, basal area, stocking levels and stand growth. Based on the stand data gathered from the inventory, the 18 acres of coniferous forest have the following approximate stand conditions:*

Species Composition	76% second growth redwood, 24% Douglas-fir
Basal Area	86 square feet per acre
Gross Volume/acre (redwood)	12,200 board feet
Gross Volume/acre (Douglas-fir)	3,900 board feet
Gross Overall property volume	289,800 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 10% 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 many of the butt logs and is estimated at 15%. With these factors in mind the overall net conifer volume on the property is approximately 257,300 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 3.1% per year. This growth rate is about average for managed stands of second growth trees as the property has been recently harvested. A growth rate of 3.1% per year equates to an annual increase in the conifer resource of 9,000 board feet over the entire property. Converting this figure to cubic feet gives a current growth rate of 750 cubic feet over the entire property, or 34 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 Starling primary residence is located on the property. The property is also used for recreational trail hiking, watershed and wildlife habitat.

CONCLUSION

The property is well suited for timber management into the future. The property was selectively harvested eight years ago and the forest resource is currently healthy and experiencing a growth rate consistent with managed forests. Ms. Starling has indicated that she wants to continue to manage the timber resource and stand conditions warrant another harvest in the next ten to fifteen 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 conifer residual basal area in the timbered portions of the property is 86 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 34 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:

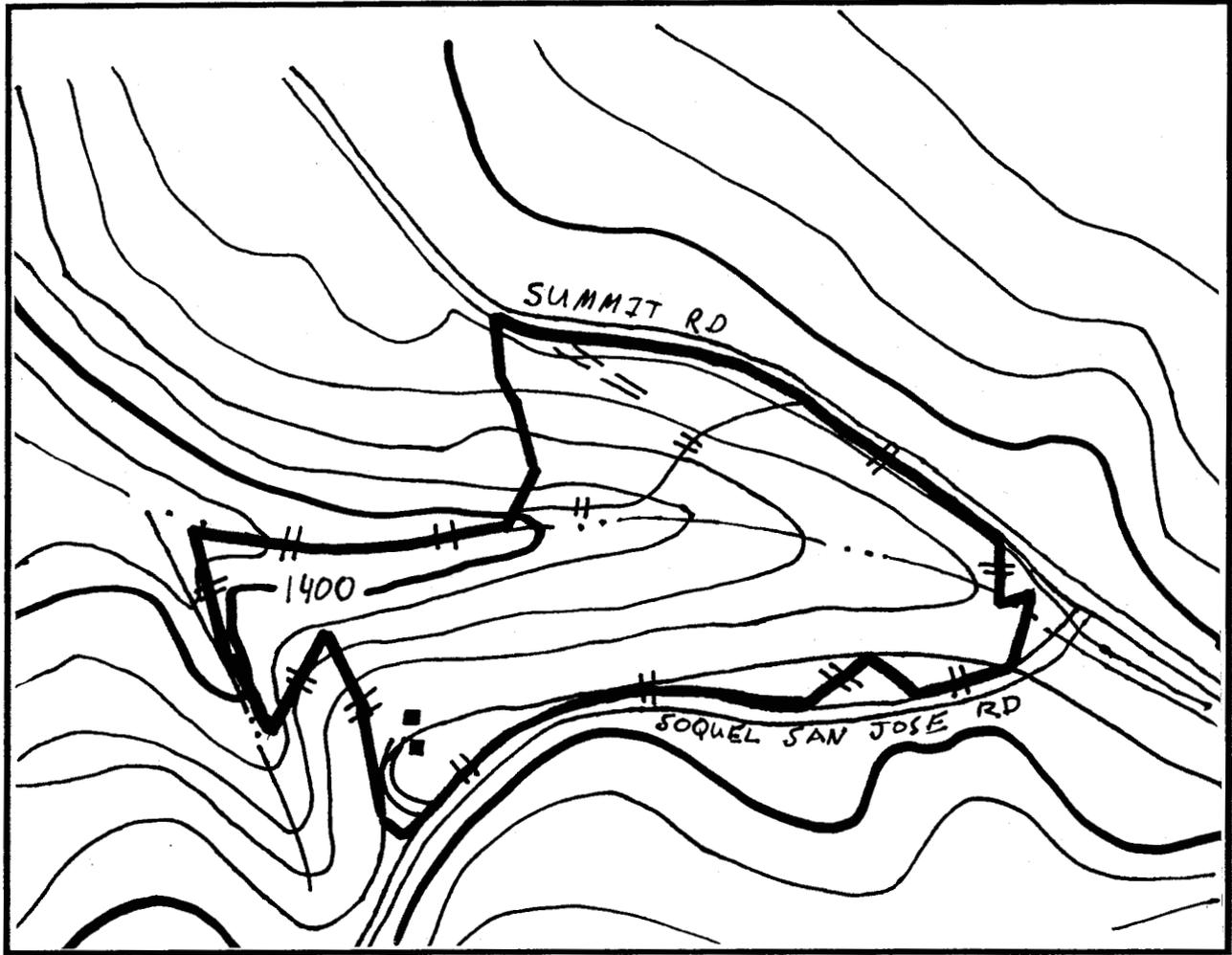


Joseph Culver
Registered Professional Forester #2674

10/8/07

Date

LANDS OF STARLING
PLAN AREA MAP
 SANTA CRUZ COUNTY
 T9S, R1W, SEC. 25, 26 MDB&M



LEGEND

- PROPERTY BOUNDARY
- FOREST BOUNDARY
- PERMANENT ROAD
- SEASONAL ROAD
- WATERCOURSE
- STRUCTURE

SCALE: 1 INCH = 500

CONTOUR INTERVAL = 40 FEET

