

**RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION  
OF THE COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT**

**Resolution Number 25-**

**Record Number PLN-2025-19251**

**Assessor Parcel Numbers 108-301-009, 221-271-001, 108-301-005 and 221-251-004**

**Making the required findings for certifying compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act and recommends that the Planning Commission approve the French Lot Line Adjustment, Zone Reclassification and addition of parcel into a new Class B Agricultural Preserve Williamson Act Contract.**

**WHEREAS**, An applicant initiated Lot Line Adjustment (LLA), Zone Reclassification (ZR) and Class B Williamson Act Contract involving three legal parcels which include four Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs), owned by the French family. The Lot Line Adjustment is between three legal parcels, resulting in three legal parcels. The Zone Reclassification is necessary within one of the newly proposed parcels to qualify lands for a new Class B Agricultural Preserve under the Williamson Act.

**WHEREAS**, The proposed project was brought before the Williamson Act Advisory Committee on July 31, 2025, and the Zone Reclassification and Class B Agricultural Preserve Williamson Act Contract was recommended for approval (Attachment 3).

**WHEREAS**, the County Planning Division, as the lead agency, found the project exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15317 of the CEQA Guidelines; and

**WHEREAS**, the Humboldt County Planning Commission held a duly noticed public hearing on **October 2, 2025**; reviewed, considered, and discussed the application for a Lot Line Adjustment, Zone Reclassification, and addition of a proposed newly created parcel into a Class B Agricultural Preserve Williamson Act Contract.

**Now, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Planning Commission makes all the following findings:

- 1. FINDING:**                      **PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** A Lot Line Adjustment (LLA), Zone Reclassification (ZR) involving three legal parcels which include four Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs), owned by the French family and an establishment of a new Class B Agricultural Preserve and Williamson Act Contract of 1,207.72 acres on one of the three resultant parcels. The Lot Line Adjustment is between three legal parcels, resulting in three legal parcels of approximately 590.98-acres (Parcel A), 618.48-acres (Parcel B), and 1,207.72-acres (Parcel C). Proposed Parcel C requires Zone Reclassification from Agriculture Exclusive (AE), Forestry Recreation (FR), and Unclassified (U) to Agriculture Exclusive

with a combining zone for a Special Building Site with a minimum of 160-acres (AE-B-5(160)) in order for Parcel C to be placed into a new Class B Agricultural Preserve under the Williamson Act.

**EVIDENCE:** a) Project File: PLN-2025-19251.

- 2. FINDING:** **CEQA.** The requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act have been complied with. The project is exempt from environmental review per Section 15305 – Minor Alterations in Land Use, and 15317 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)- Open Space Contracts.

**EVIDENCE:** a) The Lot Line Adjustment, Zone Reclassification and new Class B Williamson Act Agricultural Preserve Contract does not result in a change in land use or overall density. The Lot Line Adjustment is exempt pursuant to Section 15305 of the CEQA Guidelines, which applies to minor alterations in land use limitations and the Williamson Act establishment and rezoning is exempt pursuant to Section 15317 of the CEQA Guidelines, which applies to the establishment of open space contracts.

### **ZONE RECLASSIFICATION (ZR)**

- 3. FINDING:** The proposed project is in the public interest.

**EVIDENCE:** a) The parcel that contains areas to be rezoned (proposed new Parcel C) are all adjacent to existing Timber Production Zone (TPZ) and Agriculture Exclusive (AE) lands. The land is currently owned and utilized by the French family for agricultural and farming purposes. With approved Zone Reclassification and Class B Agricultural Preserve designation, approximately 1,207.72-acres would be established as an agricultural preserve and entered into a Williamson Act Contract. Conservation, development and utilization of forest resources are consistent with the California Timberland Productivity Act. Protecting forest and agricultural lands for continued timber, agricultural production and open space is in the public interest.

- 4. FINDING:** The proposed change is consistent with the General Plan.

**EVIDENCE:** a) The main objective of the proposed Zone Reclassification is to rezone portions of a newly created parcel to AE (B-5(160)) to establish a new Class B Agricultural Preserve under the Williamson Act. The applicant owns multiple properties within the area and currently utilizes the lands for agriculture and farming. The proposed Zone Reclassification and Class B Agricultural Preserve on a proposed newly created 1,207.72-acre parcel will be consistent with the General Plan should the Zone Reclassification and new Class B Agricultural Preserve Contract be approved.

**5. FINDING:** There is no substantial evidence that the project will have a significant effect on the environment.

**EVIDENCE:** a) Changes to the zoning are requested on portions of a newly created approximately 1,207.72-acre parcel. The parcel is adjacent and contiguous to the existing lands owned by the French family and currently are used for agriculture and farming. No development is proposed as part of this project which could negatively impact the environment.

**6. FINDING:** The proposed development does not reduce the residential density for any parcel below that utilized by the Department of Housing and Community Development in determining compliance with housing element law unless the following written findings are made supported by substantial evidence: 1) the reduction is consistent with the adopted general plan including the housing element; and 2) the remaining sites identified in the housing element are adequate to accommodate the County share of the regional housing need; and 3) the property contains insurmountable physical or environmental limitations and clustering of residential units on the developable portions of the site has been maximized.

**EVIDENCE:** a) This project will have no net effect on housing densities. The purpose of this LLA is to reconfigure parcels within family ownership for estate planning and zone reclassification is necessary to add lands to a new Williamson Act contract. None of the parcels were included in the 2019 County Housing Inventory and no development is proposed. The project is consistent with the County's housing element.

## **LOT LINE ADJUSTMENT**

**7. FINDING:** The Lot Line Adjustment application is complete.

**EVIDENCE:** a) The applicant has submitted all application requirements pursuant to Section 325.5-5, including a completed and signed application form, copies of present owners' deeds, a preliminary title report, copies of the creation documents for the parcels and a Lot Line Adjustment Plot Plan.

**8. FINDING:** The project parcel is consistent with the Subdivision Map Act.

**EVIDENCE:** a) A review of creation documents to determine the legal status of the subject parcels found that all involved parcels have been created in compliance with the Subdivision Map Act. APN 108-301-009, 221-271-001, 108-301-005 and 221-251-004 were all created legally by Lot Line Adjustment 18-011, recorded July 1, 2019, instrument number 2019-011214.

**9. FINDING:** The project conforms to zoning and building ordinances.

**EVIDENCE:** a) The purpose of the Lot Line Adjustment is to adjust the boundaries of existing parcels for family estate planning and to afford the landowner the reduced tax benefit under a Williamson Act contract which maintains large scale vacant land for commercial timber production and open space for preserving forest ecosystems. In addition to the Lot Line Adjustment, a Zone Reclassification is proposed as part of this project, however this is only to comply with Agricultural Preserve guidelines. There is no development associated with the proposed project. The Lot Line Adjustment conforms to zoning and building ordinances.

**10. FINDING:** The project is consistent with the General Plan.

**EVIDENCE:** a) Land Use Designations 4.8: Agricultural Grazing (AG) plan designation applies to dry-land grazing areas in relatively small land holdings that support cattle ranching or other grazing supplemented by timber harvest activities that are part of the ranching operation, and other non-prime agricultural lands.

Timberland (T) designation is utilized to classify land that is primarily suitable for the growing, harvesting and production of timber. Prairie and grazing lands may be intermixed. The proposed project consists of a Lot Line Adjustment (LLA), between three legal parcels and resulting in three legal parcels. The purpose of the LLA is to reconfigure parcels within family ownership for estate planning. No ownership changes or development is proposed as part of this project. In addition to the LLA, proposed newly created Parcel C will be entered into a Class B Williamson Act contract. This project is consistent with the AG and T Land Use Designations.

- b) Community Infrastructure and Services Element Chapter 5: Goals and policies contained in this Chapter relate to the protection and enhancement of roads, recreational parks, fire protective services, water supply, drainage and other public utilities. The LLA will not impact any community infrastructure and services elements as no development is proposed. There will be no impact on roads, recreational parks, fire protective services, and water supply. Proposed Parcel A has two residences and existing on-site water and sewer. Proposed Parcel B and C will develop water and sewer under a separate permit should development be proposed at a later date.
- c) Circulation, Chapter 7: Goals and policies contained in this chapter describe the general location and extent of existing and proposed major throughfares, transportation routes, terminals and other local transportation facilities. The LLA will not result in any circulation or transportation issues as no development is proposed.
- d) Housing Element, Chapter 8: Goals and policies contained in this Element seek to identify existing and projected housing needs and establish goals, policies, standards and measures for the preservation, improvement, and development of housing. This project will have no net effect on housing densities. The purpose of this LLA is to reconfigure parcels within family ownership for estate planning. None of the parcels were included in the 2019 County Housing Inventory and no development is proposed. The project is consistent with the County's housing element.

- e) Conservation and Open Space, Chapter 10: Goals and policies contained in the Conservation Element relate to the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources. The Open Space Element guides the comprehensive and long-range preservation and conservation of open-space lands. According to the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB), the parcels do contain sensitive habitat areas as well as rare and endangered species have been identified. On APN 221-271-001 and 221-251-004, the Southern Torrent Salamander and Foothill yellow-legged frog have been identified. There are also numerous protected Streamside Management Areas throughout all four parcels, as French Creek, Bear Creek and the Mattole River flow through. Although these sensitive species and habitats have been identified, the four parcels contain over 2,400-acres and no development is proposed.

This project will have no effect on open space and will only benefit the comprehensive and long-range preservation of open space lands.

- f) Cultural Resources, Section 10.6: Goals and policies contained in this Chapter relate to the protection and enhancement of significant cultural resources, providing heritage, historic, scientific, educational, social and economic values to benefit present and future generations. According to the Northwest Information Center (NWIC), there are two recorded archaeological sites identified within the four parcels. NWIC recommended consultation with local native tribes regarding traditional, cultural, and religious heritage values. Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria responded to the project application and found that the project does not appear to represent a source of significant impacts on cultural resources. Bear River Band requested that the standard inadvertent archaeological discovery protocols be in place for any ground disturbing activities. No additional increased threats to hazards or resources are anticipated as a result of the LLA.
- g) Water Resources, Chapter 11: Goals and policies contained in the Water Resources Element addresses water planning issues including river and stream water quality, stormwater runoff, groundwater management, water needs of fish and wildlife,

water consumption, conservation and re-use methods. Throughout the over 2,400-acres owned by the French family, there are many water ways that traverse the parcels. The Mattole River is the largest, and runs along the east side of proposed Parcel A and along the west side of proposed Parcel B and Parcel C. French Creek (intermittent water source according to the State Water Board) runs through Parcel A and C, and Bear Creek (perennial water source according to the State Water Board) runs through Parcel C. The purpose of the LLA is to rearrange parcel lines within the family for estate planning, there is no change in ownership and no development proposed. Therefore, no impact on water resources is anticipated.

- h) Safety Element, Chapter 14: Goals and policies contained in this Chapter relate to communities that are designed and built to minimize the potential for loss of life and property resulting from natural and manmade hazards; and to prevent unnecessary exposure to areas of geologic instability, floodplains, tsunami run-up areas, high risk wildland fire areas, and airport areas planned and conditioned to prevent unnecessary exposure of people and property to risks of damage or injury. The subject parcels are located in an area of Moderate Instability. The parcels are not within a fault hazard zone, not within an area of mapped historic landslides, and are not located in an area of potential liquefaction. The subject parcels are also not located within a FEMA flood zone and are not susceptible to dam failure inundation. The subject parcels are located within a State Responsibility Area for fire protection and within a moderate to high fire hazard severity zone. The parcels are covered within the Telegraph Ridge Fire Protection District who provides structural fire protection as well as respond to medical emergencies. Drainage, noise and airport safety are not anticipated to be impacted due to this project as no development is proposed.

**11. FINDING:**

The proposed development and conditions under which it may be operated or maintained will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare; or materially injurious to property or improvements in the vicinity.

**EVIDENCE:** a) All reviewing referral agencies have approved or conditionally approved the proposed project (see Attachment 5). The project will not result in changes in land use or density and will not create a new parcel. The proposed project is not anticipated to be detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare; or materially injurious to property or improvements in the vicinity. No development is proposed as part of this project.

**12. FINDING:** The project, and the conditions under which it may be operated or maintained, will not adversely impact the environment; and the required CEQA findings can be made for any development which is subject to the regulations of CEQA.

**EVIDENCE:** a) The Lot Line Adjustment does not result in a change in land use or overall density and is intended solely to accommodate on the ground existing historic encroachments. No development is proposed. As lead agency, the Planning and Building Department found the Lot Line Adjustment to be categorically exempt pursuant to 15305(a) of the CEQA Guidelines. Section 15305(a) applies to minor lot line adjustments not resulting in the creation of any new parcel.

#### **FINDINGS FOR AGRICULTURAL PRESERVE ESTABLISHMENT**

**13. FINDING:** The proposed project is consistent with the Humboldt County General Plan.

**EVIDENCE:** a) Chapter 4.5 of the Humboldt County General Plan “Agricultural Resources” recognizes the significance of agriculture in Humboldt County. The two goals listed under 4.5.3 include “Agricultural Production – economically viable agricultural operations contributing to the growth and stability of the economy and a strong market demand for agricultural lands dedicated to agricultural production” and also “Preservation of Agricultural Lands – agricultural land preserved to the maximum extent possible for continued agricultural use in parcel sizes that support economically feasible agricultural operations.” A specific policy, AG-P3, is to “Support the Williamson Act



Property Tax Incentive Program” by continuing, enhancing, and growing the County Williamson Act program. The primary purpose of the Williamson Act of 1965 was to preserve agricultural and open space lands by discouraging the premature and unnecessary conversion to urban areas. The Williamson Act Contracts restrict subdivision of preserve lands, rendering rights of division as subservient to the contract. Several additional policies in Chapter 4.5 of the Humboldt County General Plan prioritize the conservation of agricultural lands and soils (AG-P5, AG-P6, AG-P16).

**14. FINDING:** The land to be included in the agricultural preserve contract is, and will continue to be, used for the purpose of producing agricultural commodities for commercial purposes, and uses compatible with agriculture.

**EVIDENCE:** a) The proposed preserve land has historically been used for agriculture and animal sales. The proposed preserve would support and encourage continuation of commercial agricultural uses through contractual obligation. Based on information submitted, the establishment of the preserve will not conflict with any adjoining or surrounding land uses. The Humboldt County Williamson Act Advisory Committee has reviewed the proposed preserve and recommended approval.

#### **CLASS B CRITERIA- HUMBOLDT COUNTY WILLIAMSON ACT GUIDELINES**

**15. FINDING:** The preserve area shall contain not less than 600 acres of land, and no individual lot or parcel of land shall be less than 160 contiguous acres.

**EVIDENCE:** a) The subject Class B Agricultural Preserve contract is requested on a proposed newly created 1,207.72-acre parcel that is being processed with a Lot Line Adjustment and Zone Reclassification within the same application. The Lot Line Adjustment is between three legal parcels, resulting in three legal parcels, however only one parcel is requested to be placed into the Williamson Act. The proposed 1,207.72-acre parcel creates a preserve over 600-acres and the parcel itself is over the minimum 160-acres.

**16. FINDING:** All land placed into a Class B Grazing Land Preserve and Contract

must be zoned Timberland Production Zone (TPZ) or Agriculture Exclusive with a combining zone establishing a 160-acre minimum parcel size (AE-B-5(160)).

**EVIDENCE:** a) The subject Class B Agricultural Preserve contract is requested on a proposed newly created 1,207.72-acre parcel that is being processed with a Lot Line Adjustment and Zone Reclassification within the same application. The Lot Line Adjustment is between three legal parcels, resulting in three legal parcels, however only one parcel is requested to be placed into the Williamson Act. The newly proposed parcel is zoned a combination of Timberland Production (TPZ) and Agricultural Exclusive (AE) with small portions zoned Unclassified (U) and Forest Recreation (FR). For this parcel to be considered for a Williamson Act Class B Contract, the U, FR, and AE zones requested to be reclassified to AE (B-5(160)).

**17. FINDING:** Land within the preserve shall be non-prime agricultural land of statewide or local significance.

**EVIDENCE:** a) There is an under 40-acre portion of the proposed newly created 1,207.72-acre parcel that is identified as having prime agriculture land, however this totals under 3 percent of the land requested for the Agricultural Preserve and therefore is not believed to be reason for denial of the contract.

### **DECISION**

**NOW, THEREFORE,** based on the above findings and evidence, the Humboldt County Planning Commission does hereby

- Adopt the findings set forth in this resolution; and
- Approves the Lot Line Adjustment, subject to the recommended conditions of approval.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Planning Commission recommends that the Board of Supervisors of the County of Humboldt:

1. Approve the Zone Reclassification.
2. Adopt Ordinance No. \_\_\_\_\_ amending Section 311-7 of the Humboldt County Code by reclassifying property in the Ettersburg area [PLN-2025-19251] so that the Zone Reclassification changes from Agriculture Exclusive (AE), Unclassified (U) and Agriculture General (AG) to Agriculture Exclusive (AE B-5(160)).
3. Approve the resolution establishing the Class B Williamson Act Contract.
4. Enter into a new Williamson Act Land Conservation Contract with the landowners.
5. Direct the Planning Staff to prepare and file a Notice of Exemption with the County Clerk and Office of Planning and Research.

Adopted after review and consideration of all the evidence on **October 2, 2025**.

The motion was made by COMMISSIONER \_\_\_\_\_ and seconded by COMMISSIONER \_\_\_\_\_ and the following vote:

AYES: Commissioners:

NOES: Commissioners:

ABSTAIN: Commissioners:

ABSENT: Commissioners:

DECISION:

I, John H. Ford, Secretary to the Planning Commission of the County of Humboldt, do hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and correct record of the action taken on the above-entitled matter by said Commission at a meeting held on the date noted above.

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John H. Ford, Director  
Planning and Building Department