



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 10/2/2025

File #: 25-1176

To: Planning Commission

From: Planning and Building Department

Agenda Section: Consent

SUBJECT:

Satterlee General Plan Amendment, Zone Reclassification and Agricultural Preserve

Assessor Parcel Numbers: 214-113-003, 214-254-004, 214-254-002, 214-253-002, 214-116-003, 214-116-004, 214-111-003, 214-221-001, 214-221-008, 214-153-003, 214-155-001, 214-245-005, 214-245-004, 214-245-003, 214-246-002, 216-301-006, 216-301-005, 216-301-011 and 216-186-002.

Record Number: PLN-2025-19168

Fort Seward Area, Southern Humboldt

A General Plan Amendment (GPA), Zone Reclassification (ZR) and Class B Williamson Act Contract addition involving 17 legal parcels which include 19 Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs) owned by the Satterlee family. The GPA is requested on four APNs to change the land use designation from Residential Agriculture (RA) and Commercial Recreation (CR) to Timberlands (T) and Agriculture Grazing (AG). The ZR is requested for 16 APNs that will have areas rezoned to Timberland Production (TPZ) from Agriculture Exclusive (AE), Unclassified (U) and Agriculture General (AG). One APN, 216-186-002, is a 52-acre parcel that is proposed to be added to the existing Fort Seward Ranch Class B Williamson Act Contract.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Planning Commission:

1. Adopt the resolution, (Attachment 1) which does the following:
 - a. Make all of the required findings for approval based on evidence in the staff report and public testimony; and
 - b. Recommend that the Board of Supervisors approve the General Plan Amendment and Zone Reclassification; and
 - c. Recommend that the Board of Supervisors approve the addition of APN 216-186-002

into the Fort Seward Class B Williamson Act Contract.

DISCUSSION:

This project is a General Plan Amendment (GPA), Zone Reclassification (ZR) and Class B Williamson Act Contract addition involving 17 legal parcels, which include 19 APNs, owned by the Satterlee family. The General Plan Amendment is requested for four APNs to change the parcels from Residential Agriculture (RA) and Commercial Recreation (CR) to Timberlands (T) and Agriculture Grazing (AG). The proposed rezone is requested for 16 of the APNs that will have areas rezoned to Timberland Production (TPZ) from Agriculture Exclusive (AE), Unclassified (U) and Agriculture General (AG). One APN, 216-186-002, is a 52-acre assessor's parcel that is proposed to be added to the existing Fort Seward Ranch Class B Williamson Act Contract as it was erroneously left out of the original contract. The proposed addition was brought before the Williamson Act Advisory Committee on July 31, 2025, and the addition was recommended for approval (Attachment 3). The General Plan Amendment, Zone Reclassification and Williamson Act parcel addition are all requested to maintain the open space, ranching and timber management use of the landholdings and for preserving forest ecosystems. A petition to change the General Plan designation and Zone Reclassification was accepted by the Board of Supervisors on July 8th, 2025 (PLN-2025-19234).

Based on review of Planning Division reference sources and comments from all responding referral agencies, planning staff believe that the applicant has submitted evidence in support of making all of the required findings for approving the General Plan Amendment, Zone Reclassification and parcel addition to the existing Fort Seward Ranch Class B Williamson Act Contract.

The project is in the public interest as it will ensure that these lands are protected through zoning and open space contracts for continued timber, agricultural production and open space. The Guiding Principles of the Humboldt County General Plan encourage, incentivize and support agriculture, timber ecosystem services and compatible uses on resource lands.

Two of the parcels (APN 216-301-005 and 216-301-006) were identified in the 2019 Housing Inventory. Both parcels were identified within the Above Moderate-Income inventory in the Rural Residential Zoning Group and have the potential to support one housing unit each. APN 216-301-005 is 11.59-acres and APN 216-301-006 is 25.06-acres. Both parcels are undeveloped and vacant and not proximate to public facilities.

Even though creating and protecting affordable housing opportunities is directed within the General Plan, the location of the two parcels is more appropriate for agriculture. The Zone Reclassification aligns with the goals, policies and standards of the Guiding Principles (Section 1.4 in the General Plan) and Forest Resources (Section 4.6 in the General Plan). The Guiding Principles encourage, incentivize and support agriculture, timber ecosystem services and compatible uses on resource lands. The Forest Resource section supports the conservation, development and utilization of forest resources and its policies are consistent with the California Timberland Productivity Act.

Although the applicant is requesting removal of two identified Housing Inventory parcels, the remaining sites identified in the housing element are anticipated to be adequate to accommodate the County's share of the regional housing needs. According to Chapter 8, table 8-5 in the updated 2019 Housing Element of the General Plan, projected fair share housing needs in the Above Moderate-income category are 583 units. In table 8-6, residential land inventory identified within the Above Median-income category (RR, RA and RE Zoning Groups) is 1,116 parcels, with 1,214 potential housing units. This indicates the capacity of Above Moderate-Income housing inventory is over double the projected need. Should the two parcels be removed from the Above Moderate-Income inventory and converted to Agricultural lands, the remaining identified parcels are more than sufficient to meet the target need.

The two parcels identified within the 2019 Housing Element inventory are both more appropriately used for agriculture due to the proximity to other agricultural lands as well as the distance to public facilities. Both parcels are located approximately 10 miles from the nearest town and adjacent to existing lands within an Agricultural Preserve. There are no existing residential unit clusters, and all surrounding parcels contain multiple acres.

Project Location: The 17 legal parcels are located in Southern Humboldt between the area east of Highway 101 and west and northwest of Alderpoint in the Fort Seward area.

Present General Plan Land Use Designation: The 19 APNs involved in this application have Land Use Designations of either Agriculture General (AG), Residential Agriculture (RA), and/or Commercial Recreation (CR). Inland General Plan (IGP). Slope Stability (1) - low instability, (2)- Moderate Instability, and (3)- High Instability.

Present Zoning: The 19 APNs involved in this application have zoning designations of Timberland Production Zone (TPZ), Unclassified (U), Agriculture Exclusive (AE), Agriculture General (AG) and/ or Flood Plain (FP).

Environmental Review: Project is exempt from environmental review per Section 15305 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)- Minor alterations in land use limitations.

State Appeal: Project is not appealable to the California Coastal Commission.

Major concerns: None.

Monitoring Required: None.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The project was referred to responsible agencies and all responding agencies have either

recommended approval or conditioned approval (Attachment 5).

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The Planning Commission could elect not to approve the project. This alternative should be implemented if your Commission is unable to make all of the required findings. Planning Division staff is confident that the required findings can be made. Consequently, planning staff does not recommend further consideration of this alternative.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft Resolution
 - A. Conditions of Approval
 - B. GPA Site Map
 - C. Zone Reclassification and Williamson Act Contract Parcel Site Map
 - D. Draft Ordinance for Adoption by the Board of Supervisors
2. Location Map
3. Williamson Act Advisory Committee Meeting 07/31/2025 draft minutes
4. Timber Management Guide
5. Referral Agency Comments and Recommendations

Applicant:

Fort Seward Ranch
Peggy Satterlee
6020 Fort Seward Road
Garberville, CA 95542

Owner:

Peggy and Norman Satterlee
6020 Fort Seward Road
Garberville, CA 95542

Agent:

Hohman and Associates
Stephen Hohman
PO Box 733
Hydesville, CA 95547

Please contact Alice Vasterling, Associate Planner, at avasterling@co.humboldt.ca.us

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[<mailto:avasterling@co.humboldt.ca.us>](mailto:avasterling@co.humboldt.ca.us) or (707)268-3777 if you have any questions about this item.