

**RESOLUTION OF THE ZONING ADMINISTRATOR
OF THE COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT**

Resolution Number: 25-

Record Number: PLN-2025-19303

Assessor's Parcel Numbers: 308-071-006-000, 308-071-009-000, and 308-071-011-000

Resolution by the Zoning Administrator of the County of Humboldt certifying compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act and conditionally approving the Humboldt County Public Works Department Landfill Repair Coastal Development Permit

WHEREAS, The Humboldt County Public Works Department has submitted an application and evidence in support of approving a Coastal Development Permit (CDP) to the recently approved Emergency CDP (PLN-2025-19302) which authorized repairs to a landfill cap, improvements to surface drainage, and replacement of the subsurface drainage systems for a closed landfill. The Leach field rehabilitation activities include removal of the aboveground concrete vault, installation of water storage tanks and associated distribution piping, installation of new transmission lines connecting the leachate transfer system to new storage tanks, installation of new disposal trenches, and improvements to the access road leading to the leach field. The site is host to a landfill that was closed in 1979.

WHEREAS, on August 13, 2025 the Humboldt County Planning and Building Department approved an emergency Coastal Development Permit (PLN-2025-19302) for the activities associated with this permit, to protect public health by ensuring that the work was completed prior to the wet season; and

WHEREAS, the County Planning Division has reviewed the submitted application and evidence and has referred the application and evidence to involved reviewing agencies for site inspections, comments, and recommendations; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Division, as the Lead Agency, has determined that the project qualifies for categorical exemptions from environmental review pursuant to Section 15301 *Existing Facilities* of the CEQA Guidelines; and

WHEREAS, Attachments 2 and 3 of the Planning Division staff report includes evidence in support of making all of the required findings for approving the proposed Coastal Development Permit (Record Number PLN-2025-19303; and

WHEREAS, the Humboldt County Zoning Administrator held a duly-noticed public hearing on December 18, 2025, and reviewed, considered, and discussed the application for the Coastal Development Permit and reviewed and considered all evidence and testimony presented at the hearing.

Now, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Zoning Administrator makes all the following findings:

- 1. FINDING:** Project Description: A follow up Coastal Development Permit (CDP) to an approved Emergency CDP (PLN-2025-19302) which authorized repairs to a landfill cap, improvements to surface drainage, and replacement of the subsurface drainage systems for a closed landfill. The Leach field rehabilitation activities include removal of the aboveground concrete vault, installation of water storage tanks and associated distribution piping, installation of new transmission lines connecting the leachate transfer system to new storage tanks, installation of new disposal trenches, and improvements to the access road leading to the leach field. The site is host to a landfill that was closed in 1979.

EVIDENCE: a) Project File: PLN-2025-19303

- 2. FINDING:** **CEQA:** The requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act have been met. The Humboldt County Planning Commission has considered the project and finds the proposed project is exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15301 *Existing Facilities* of the State CEQA Guidelines.

EVIDENCE: a) The Class 1 exemption applies to the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, licensing, or minor alterations of existing or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, including existing facilities of both investor and publicly owned utilities to provide sewerage or other public utility services. The required repairs to a landfill cap, improvements to surface drainage, and replacement of the subsurface drainage systems for a closed landfill are necessary for the health and safety of the community and environment. The vegetation management activities would occur to maintain safe, reliable, and mandated clearance to comply with regulatory requirements for public safety and fire prevention.

FINDINGS FOR COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AND SPECIAL PERMITS

3. FINDING: The proposed development is in conformance with all applicable policies and standards in the Humboldt Bay Area Plan.

- EVIDENCE:**
- a) The project area encompasses lands with a Public Facilities land use designation which is utilized to classify land appropriate for use by a governmental agency or public agency and which has the purpose of serving the public health, safety, convenience, or welfare. A functional landfill cap and leach field is critical for the existing parcel. The proposed project to repair the damaged public infrastructure is principally permitted as an essential service for a minor utility such as the failing leachate collection system. The subject properties are currently operating as a closed landfilled and public facility. The proposed repairs and vegetation management to aid future access are required for the health and safety of the local community.
 - b) The project will not add to nor subtract from the Housing Inventory. The project permits the repair to a landfill cap, improvements to surface drainage, and replacement of the subsurface drainage systems to a landfill facility that was closed in 1979. The project is consistent with the County's Housing Element.
 - c) The emergency work was completed and did have significant impacts on sensitive species, watercourses, or sensitive habitats. A site visit with representatives from California Department Fish & Wildlife, California Coastal Commission, Humboldt County Division of Environmental Health, and Humboldt County Department of Building & Planning was held on July 1, 2025 prior to the work and all representatives agreed with the urgency of the proposed work and with the finding that the proposed work will not adversely affect environmentally sensitive habitat areas. A post work report was prepared by the Department of Public Works showing how the work was completed in accordance with all best management practices.
 - d) The project was referred to the Northwest Information Center (NWIC), the Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria, the Blue Lake Rancheria and the Wiyot Tribe. The NWIC responded

requesting the Department work with local Native American Tribes and stated there was no record of previous cultural resources field studies at the location. The repair of an existing septic system in a previously disturbed area is not expected to have any potential cultural resource impacts. The Planning and Building Department has conditioned the standard inadvertent discovery protocol to be included among the recommended conditions of approval.

- e) The subject property is in a designated Coastal Scenic area however the repair of the existing landfill cap and leachate collection system will not alter any natural landforms and will not impact compatibility with the character of surrounding areas. The work will be below ground and will not impact views to or along the coast.

4. FINDING:

The proposed development is consistent with the purposes of the existing zoning in which the sites are located and conforms with all applicable standards and requirements of the zoning regulations.

EVIDENCE:

- a) The project area encompasses lands with a Public Facilities zoning designation which is intended for lands used by a governmental agency or public agency and which has the purpose of serving the public health, safety, convenience, or welfare. A functional landfill cap and leach field is critical for the existing parcel. The proposed project to repair the damaged public infrastructure is principally permitted as an essential service for a minor utility such as the failing leachate collection system.
- b) The subject parcel is located in an area of low to moderate geologic instability. It is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Fault Hazard Zone, within an area of potential liquefaction, or within an area with mapped historic landslides. An eastern portion of subject parcel APN 308-071-009 is located within a tsunami hazard zone or is susceptible to coastal flooding.
The subject parcel is located within a moderate fire hazard severity zone. The subject parcel is within the State Response Area and the Loleta Fire Protection District. No increased threats to hazards are anticipated as a result of the project. However, to minimize potential impacts to the greatest extent feasible, the

applicant proposes implementing best management practices (BMPs) related to the protection of biological and cultural resources. Conditions of approval require the implementation of BMPs and prohibit the use of herbicides under the project to minimize impacts associated with the project.

- c) The project is consistent with the Wetlands combining zone because no development is proposed in wetland areas and appropriate setbacks are provided to all wetland and riparian areas.
- d) The project is consistent with the Design Review combining zone because no new development is proposed. All work is related to the existing landfill and no structures are proposed. Alterations to landforms are minimized.

5. FINDING:

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

EVIDENCE:

- a) The proposed repair project will reduce the likelihood of a future failure of the landfill earthen cap, surface drainage connections, and leachate collection system and leach field. This action complies with all development standards of the zone district which are intended to protect public health safety and welfare. Based on staff analysis and the findings made in this report, there is no evidence that the proposed tank replacement will be materially injurious to properties or improvements in the vicinity.

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.

EVIDENCE:

- a) No additional development is proposed. The project is consistent with the County's Housing Element.

DECISION

NOW, THEREFORE, based on the above findings and evidence, the Humboldt County Zoning Administrator does hereby:

- Adopt the findings set forth in this resolution; and
- Conditionally approves the Public Works Coastal Development Permit subject to the Conditions of Approval in Attachment 1A.

Adopted after review and consideration of all the evidence on **December 18, 2025.**

I, John H. Ford, Zoning Administrator 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 Zoning Administrator at a meeting held on the date noted above.

John H. Ford, Director
Planning and Building Department