

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

**Resolution Number: 25-**

**Record Number: PLN-2025-19250**

**Assessor's Parcel Number: 517-111-001**

**Resolution by the Zoning Administrator of the County of Humboldt certifying compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act and conditionally approving the Sue-Meg State Park Coastal Development Permit and Special Permit.**

**WHEREAS**, A Coastal Development Permit (CDP) for the drilling and installation of a new water well to serve Sue-Meg State Park. Two sites have been identified and if well site 1 is determined to be a reliable source of water, well site 1 will be developed and well site 2 will not be developed. If a reliable source of water is not found at well site 1, then a pilot hole will be drilled at well site 2. If reliable water is found at well site 2, then the well will be developed. If a reliable water source is found, Sue-Meg State Park will no longer need to rely on Penn Creek during the busy peak season to make drinking water. Minimal visual impacts are anticipated; however, a Special Permit is included for Design Review; and

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

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Division, as the Lead Agency, has determined that the project qualifies for a categorical exemption from environmental review pursuant to Section 15303 *New Construction or conversion of small structures*; and

**WHEREAS**, Attachment 3 in the Planning Division staff report includes evidence by the applicant in support of making all of the required findings for approving the proposed Coastal Development Permit and Special Permit (Record Number PLN-2025-19250); and

**WHEREAS**, the Humboldt County Zoning Administrator held a duly-noticed public hearing on August 7, 2025, and reviewed, considered, and discussed the application for the Coastal Development Permit and Special 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:

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| 1. | <b>FINDING:</b>  |    | A Coastal Development Permit (CDP) for the drilling and installation of a new water well to serve Sue-Meg State Park. Two sites have been identified and if well site 1 is determined to be a reliable source of water, well site 1 will be developed and well site 2 will not be developed. If a reliable source of water is not found at well site 1, then a pilot hole will be drilled at well site 2. If reliable water is found at well site 2, then the well will be developed. If a reliable water source is found, Sue-Meg State Park will no longer need to rely on Penn Creek during the busy peak season to make drinking water. Minimal visual impacts are anticipated; however, a Special Permit is included for Design Review.  |
|    | <b>EVIDENCE:</b> | a) | Project File: PLN-2025-19250.   |
| 2. | <b>FINDING:</b>  |    | <b>CEQA:</b> 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 15303 <i>New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures</i> of the State CEQA Guidelines.  |
|    | <b>EVIDENCE:</b> | a) | Class 3 consists of construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures; installation of small new equipment and facilities in small structures; and the conversion of existing small structures from one use to another. The proposed project is to drill and install a new water well for Sue-Meg State Park to not rely on Penn Creek for water during the busy peak season. Two locations have been identified for potential well sites. If a reliable source of water is found, a concrete slab will be poured on top of the ground surface around the well casing. The size of the slab will be approximately 6 feet by 6 feet and 6 inches thick. A small wooden structure would be placed on the slab to cover the well, and it will not be more than 9 feet in height. Section 15303 of the CEQA guidelines exempts new construction or conversions of small structures. |

| FINDINGS FOR COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AND SPECIAL PERMITS |           |    |   |
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| 3.  | FINDING:  |    | The proposed development is in conformance with all applicable policies and standards in the Trinidad Bay Area Plan (TAP) of the Humboldt County Local Coastal Program.   |
|   | EVIDENCE: | a) | Land Use 4.3: The purpose of the Public Recreation (PR) land use designation is to protect publicly owned lands suitable for recreation and development of resource protection. The nearly 400-acre parcel is owned by the State of California and has approximately 120 camp sites available year-round. Having access to reliable and clean water is essential to public recreation and is consistent with the land use designation.  |
|   |           | b) | <p>Hazards 3.16: Minimize risk to life and property in areas of high geologic, flood and fire hazard. The subject parcel is located in an area of Moderate Instability (E2). The proposed project location is not within an area of potential liquefaction, not within an area of mapped historic landslides, not within a flood zone or a tsunami hazard zone and not susceptible to coastal inundation. The subject parcel is located within a moderate fire hazard severity zone within the State Responsibility Area for fire protection, and County Service Area Number 4 for medical emergencies.</p> <p>During the project referral period, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (NCRWQCB) sent documentation of a former Cleanup site, identifying the area of a potential source of contamination. The documents show that in 1988, an underground petroleum hydrocarbon tank that had evidence of leakage was removed. Cleanup and testing occurred up until June 7, 2023, when a “No Further Action” letter was issued by NCRWQCB. After reviewing the proposed project with the NCRWQCB and the Humboldt County Department of Environmental Health, specific Conditions of Approval were added to help identify hazardous or contaminated materials that could become present in the potential new State Park water source. The primary water source for the State Park is from a well that is closer to the identified Cleanup site and is tested regularly. The State Park is required by the State government to monitor and follow strict Best Management</p> |

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|  |  |    | Practices guidelines to ensure the safety of the environment and the visitors. No increased threats to hazards are anticipated as a result of this project.   |
|  |  | c) | Archaeological and Paleontological Resources 3.17: Shall not adversely impact archaeological or paleontological resources as identified by the State Historic Preservation Officer. The proposed project was referred to the Big Lagoon Rancheria, Yurok Tribe, NWIC and the Trinidad Rancheria. No response was received. The proposed project requires minimal ground disturbance and is located within previously disturbed areas. Well site 1 is mowed regularly and on a hillside. Well site 2 is through a seasonally inundated road used by PG&E. Within the plan submitted by the applicant, cultural resource protection protocols will be in place prior to beginning work. The standard inadvertent discovery language is also included within the Conditions of Approval.   |
|  |  | d) | Housing 3.14: Housing opportunities for persons of low and moderate income shall be protected, encouraged, and where feasible, provided. The proposed project is for the exploration of two possible well sites to provide Sue-Meg State Park with a reliable secondary source of water during the busy summer season. The subject parcel was not identified in the 2019 Housing Element Inventory, and the project will not add or subtract housing units.   |
|  |  | e) | Natural Resource Protection Policies and Standards 3.30: Environmentally sensitive habitat areas shall be protected against any significant disruption of habitat values and only uses dependent on such resources shall be allowed within such areas. The proposed project is to drill and install a new well as a secondary water source to support the Sue-Meg State Park. Two sites have been identified as having potential for reliable water. Both sites are located within previously disturbed areas. Well site 1 is mowed regularly and on a hillside. Well site 2 is through a seasonally inundated road used by PG&E. According to the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB), the parcel is located within range of the Coastal Cutthroat trout, Southern Torrent salamander, Pacific Tailed frog, Humboldt Mountain beaver, Naked Flag moss, Sonoma Tree vole, and the Bristle-Stalked sedge. Provided by the applicant, botanical surveys |

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|    |                  |    | <p>were conducted using California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Protocols for surveying and evaluating impacts to special status native plants and sensitive habitats. No sensitive species were identified within the proposed project locations. Also, per the applicants' project description, a State Park biologist will conduct bird breeding surveys within the area of potential disturbance, should disturbance to vegetation be deemed necessary during bird breeding (May 1- July 31, typically). As the proposed sites for both well test locations are within previously disturbed areas and no sensitive species or habitats were identified, the project is not anticipated to impact natural resources.</p>   |
|    |                  | f) | <p>Visual Resources 3.4: The scenic and visual qualities of coastal areas shall be considered and protected as a resource of public importance. The proposed project is consistent with the intended uses of the Public Resources (PR) zone, as having a clean and reliable water source for travelers visiting the State Park is necessary. Drilling of the test wells will not be visually detrimental to the surrounding area. The parcel does have a Design Review (D) combining zone overlay and requires a Special Permit from the Design Review Authority to ensure the project is visually compatible with the surrounding area. Should a reliable water source be identified at either site, a concrete slab will be poured on top of the ground surface around the well casing. The size of the slab will be approximately 6 feet by 6 feet and 6 inches thick. A small wooden structure would be placed on the slab to cover the well, and will not be more than 9 feet in height. Well site 1 would not require any removal of trees or vegetation, and well site 2 would require minor tree limbing of shrubs and trees for the drilling machine. The Design Review Authority has reviewed this project and has determined that significant visual impacts are not anticipated as a result of this project.</p> |
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| 4. | <b>FINDING:</b>  |    | <p>The proposed development is consistent with the purposes of the existing zoning in which the sites are located.</p>   |
|    | <b>EVIDENCE:</b> | a) | <p>The project area is within the Public Resources (PR) zone district with combining zones for Archaeological Resource Area (A), Design Review (D), Beach and Dune Area (B), Offshore Rocks and Rocky Intertidal Area (O), and Streams and Riparian</p>  |

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|  |  |    | Corridor Protection (R). Minimum lot size for the PR zone is 5,000 square feet, with minimum lot width of 50 feet and lot depth three times the lot. There are no front or side yard setbacks, and 15-foot rear yard setbacks. Maximum ground coverage is 35-percent and maximum building height is 35 feet. The development within the 400-acre parcel is consistent with the PR zoning.  |
|  |  | b) | Archaeological Resource (A) combining zones are within areas that have previously been identified as potentially culturally sensitive. The proposed project was referred to the local Native American tribes for concerns to the location and scope of the project. No response was received. Due to the relatively small disturbance proposed for the well installation, and the standard inadvertent discovery protocol condition in place, the project is not anticipated to impact Archaeological Resources.   |
|  |  | c) | The Design Review (D) combining zone provides for a design review process to preserve or enhance the area's historical, cultural or scenic values. Properties with a D combining zone require a Special Permit from the Design Review Authority. Should a reliable water source be identified at either site, a concrete slab will be poured on top of the ground surface around the well casing. The size of the slab will be approximately 6 feet by 6 feet and 6 inches thick. A small wooden structure would be placed on the slab to cover the well, and it will not be more than 9 feet in height. Well site 1 would not require any removal of trees or vegetation, and well site 2 would require minor tree limbing of shrubs and trees for the drilling machine. The Design Review Authority has reviewed this project and have determined that significant visual impacts are not anticipated as a result of this project. |
|  |  | d) | The Beach and Dune Area (B) combining zone is to regulate development in coastal beaches and dune areas that will not detract from the area's natural resource value or potential for providing recreational opportunities. The proposed project is over 1,500 feet away from beach and possible dune locations and therefore are not anticipated to impact these environments.  |
|  |  | e) | Offshore rocks and rocky intertidal (O) combining zone protects intertidal habitats and rocky marine habitats from   |

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|    |                  |    | developments and uses which would significantly degrade their resource values. The proposed project is over 1,500 feet away from offshore rocks and rocky intertidal zones and therefore are not anticipated to impact these environments.  |
|    |                  | f) | The Streams and Riparian Corridors Protection (R) combining zone provides for the maintenance, enhancement, and, where feasible, restoration of water resources by restricting development, and minimize adverse effects of runoff, interference with surface waterflow, and alteration of natural streams by protecting riparian habitats. The proposed project is to drill and install a new well as a secondary water source to support Sue-Meg State Park. The primary water source for the State Park is from a well developed in 1985. The secondary water source is from a surface draw off Penn Creek. Two test locations have been identified as having potential for reliable clean water. Proposed well site 1 is over 1,000 feet away from the Penn Creek Streamside Management Area (1,200 feet from Penn Creek). Proposed well site 2 is 200 feet from an unnamed perennial stream. During the busy summer months, the existing primary source well does not provide enough water, and Penn Creek is used to supplement. Should one of the two proposed well locations find a reliable water source, then the Penn Creek surface draw would no longer be used. The State Park would prefer not to draw off Penn Creek, which is the purpose of this application. The protections intended within the R combining zone are consistent with abandoning the use of Penn Creek for drinking water and the proposed project is not anticipated to significantly impact streams and riparian corridors. |
|    |                  | g) | The proposed project is to drill for and install a new reliable water well to serve the year-round Sue-Meg State Park as a secondary water source. The subject parcel is over 400-acres in size and is consistent with the development standards in the PR zone district and combining zones.   |
| 5. | <b>FINDING:</b>  |    | Development permits shall only be issued for a lot that was created in compliance with all applicable state and local subdivision regulations.  |
|    | <b>EVIDENCE:</b> | a) | The subject parcel was purchased by the State of California and brought into the State Parks system in 1930. According to the   |

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|    |                  |    | historic parcel map page, which was revised March 4, 1958, the State of California is listed as the owner of the property and indicates the property boundaries have stayed the same. Patrick's Point State Park is listed as occupying the parcel on this historic map, which was changed to Sue-Meg Park on September 30, 2021. Multiple permits have been issued on the subject parcel and APN 517-111-001 is considered a legal parcel.   |
| 6. | <b>FINDING:</b>  |    | 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.   |
|    | <b>EVIDENCE:</b> | a) | The project will not pose detrimental threats to properties in the vicinity, nor will it pose any kind of public health hazard. The proposed Coastal Development Permit (CDP) is for the drilling and installation of a new water well to serve Sue-Meg State Park as a secondary water source. Two sites have been identified so that Sue-Meg State Park will no longer need to rely on Penn Creek during the busy peak season to make drinking water. Finding a reliable and clean water source is in the public interest. The project is not anticipated to be detrimental to public health, safety, or welfare or materially injurious to properties or improvements in the vicinity. |
| 7. | <b>FINDING:</b>  |    | 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.  |
|    | <b>EVIDENCE:</b> | a) | The subject parcel is currently utilized for a year-round State Park with approximately 120 camping sites in the Public Recreation zone district. The subject parcel was not identified in the 2019 Housing Element Inventory, and the project will not add or subtract housing units.  |
| 8. | <b>FINDING:</b>  |    | The use of the well is unlikely to have any adverse impacts on public trust resources.  |
|    | <b>EVIDENCE:</b> | a) | The proposed project is to drill for and install a new reliable   |



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|  |  | <p>water well to serve Sue-Meg State Park as a secondary water source. The primary water source is from a well that was installed in 1985. During the busy summer months, the existing well is unable to supply the required amount of drinking water for the needs in the State Park. Currently, the secondary water source is a surface draw off Penn Creek. Two potential well sites have been identified and if well site 1 is determined to be a reliable source of water, well site 1 will be developed and well site 2 will not be developed. If a reliable source of water is not found at well site 1, then a pilot hole will be drilled at well site 2. If reliable water is found at well site 2, then the well will be developed. If a reliable water source is found, Sue-Meg State Park will no longer need to rely on Penn Creek during the busy peak season to make drinking water.</p> <p>The parcel location is 41.1363 latitude and -124.1560 longitude and elevation approximately 240 feet above sea level at the address known as 4150 Patrick's Point Drive. At both proposed locations, the well is expected to have a minimum depth of 100 feet and a maximum depth of 350 feet, have a boring diameter of 10 inches and the casing diameter 6 inches. Minimum perforation depth is 50 feet. Depth of seal is 50 feet, and the sealing material will be bentonite to prevent intrusion of surface water with the casing material PVC.</p> <p>Well site 1 is approximately 1,200 feet to the north of Penn Creek and 350 feet south of the primary water source well. According to the Natural Flows database, Penn Creek's dry-season lowest baseflow is 0.05 cubic feet per second (CFS), which equals approximately 983,000 gallons per month and wet-season median highest flow is 3.84 CFS, which equals approximately 74,456,000 gallons per month. Penn Creek is a blue line class 1 watercourse and provides important habitat for rare and endangered species including the Humboldt Mountain beaver, Coast Cutthroat trout, Southern Torrent salamander, Naked Flag moss, Sonoma Tree vole, Bristle-Stalked sedge, and Twisted Horsehair lichen.</p> <p>Well site 2 is over 3,500 feet away from Penn Creek, but 200 feet away from an unnamed perennial class 2 stream. According to</p> |
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|  |  | <p>the Natural Flows database, the unnamed perennial stream's dry-season lowest baseflow is also 0.05 cubic feet per second (CFS), and approximately 983,000 gallons per month, but the wet-season median highest flow is 4.96 CFS, which equals approximately 96,172,000 gallons per month. The unnamed stream provides important habitat for rare and endangered species including Humboldt Mountain beaver, Pacific Tailed frog, Naked Flag moss, Bristle-Stalked sedge, and Twisted Horsehair lichen.</p> <p>Penn Creek has been used as the secondary water source for the State Park since 1964, and the water right allows for 6.4-acre feet per year to be diverted. Water is typically drawn from Penn Creek June through September, and on average, pulls around 168,000 gallons per month. At the dry-season lowest baseflow of both Penn Creek and the unnamed perennial stream near proposed well site 2, this draw would account for approximately 17% of the watercourse water flow. Although this diversion has occurred for many years without identified detrimental impacts, finding an alternative clean and reliable underground water source is the intent of this application. The two locations for the test pilot holes to be drilled are determined to be the most viable options. Based on the facts outlined above, the proposed groundwater well will not increasingly interfere with any resources or substantially impair the public rights to navigation, fisheries, or water related activities or access.</p> |
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## 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 approve the Coastal Development Permit and Special Permit for the Sue-Meg State Park Well installation subject to the conditions of approval attached hereto as Attachment 1A.

Adopted after review and consideration of all the evidence on **August 7, 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.

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John H. Ford, Director  
Planning and Building Department