



# COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 3/19/2026

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File #: 26-204

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**To:** Zoning Administrator  
**From:** Planning and Building Department  
**Agenda Section:** Consent

**SUBJECT:**

Table Bluff Coastal Development, Conditional Use, and Design Review Special Permit Modification  
Assessor Parcel Numbers: 308-041-005-000 and 308-061-001-000  
Record Number: PLN-2026-19507  
Loleta/Table Bluff area

A Modification to a previously approved Coastal Development Permit, Special Permit and Conditional Use Permit for the Table Bluff Ecological Preserve managed by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. The approved permits allowed for major vegetation removal and habitat restoration including the removal of a barbed wire fence and the installation of a deer-proof fence around an experimental restoration plot. The modification would allow for the construction of a public access trail, informational signage, a picnic bench and table area and perimeter fencing. The proposed nature trail and seating will be made accessible where feasible. Continued restoration activities associated with this permit may include prescribed burns, grazing, tilling and planting, along with construction and replacement of fencing and gates as needed. A Special Permit is required for design review of the proposed improvements.

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

That the Zoning Administrator:

1. Adopt the resolution (Attachment 1) which does the following:
  - a. Finds that the Zoning Administrator has considered the Notice of Exemption and as a responsible agency, agrees with the lead agency's findings; and
  - b. Makes all required findings for approval of the Modification to the approved Coastal Development Permit, the Conditional Use Permit, and the Special Permit; and
  - c. Approves the California Department of Fish and Wildlife Coastal Development Permit, Conditional Use Permit, and Special Permit Modification as recommended by staff and subject to the conditions of approval (Attachment 1A).

DISCUSSION:

**Project Location:** The project is located in the Loleta area, on the north side of Table Bluff Rd, at the intersection of Table Bluff Rd and Indianola Reservation Rd, on the property known as 4921 Table Bluff Rd.

**Present Plan Land Use Designations:** Agricultural Exclusive Grazing Lands (AEG), Humboldt Bay Plan (HBAP), Density: 160 acres/unit, Slope Stability: Low to Moderate Instability (1,2)

**Present Zoning:** Agriculture Exclusive - 160 with combining zone designations: Archaeological Resource Area Outside Shelter Cove, Coastal Wetland Areas, Design Review, Streams and Riparian Corridors Protection (AE-160/A,W,D,R)

**Environmental Review:** The California Department of Fish and Wildlife is the lead agency under CEQA. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife adopted a Notice of Exemption (SCH #2023060030) pursuant to §15062 of the State CEQA Guidelines. The County of Humboldt is a responsible agency under CEQA §15381.

**State Appeal Status:** Project is located within the Appeals jurisdiction of the Coastal Zone and is therefore appealable to the California Coastal Commission.

**Major Issues:** None

**Executive Summary:** The applicant is seeking a modification to an approved Coastal Development within the Appeals Jurisdiction of the Coastal Zone, a Conditional Use Permit for habitat restoration on an AE zoned parcel, and a Special Permit for Design Review. The modification will allow for public access improvements associated with the ecological preserve.

The previously approved permit allowed for the following Major Vegetation Removal and Habitat Restoration activities: 1) Felling a non-contiguous 9 acres of non-native trees including Monterey pine, Monterey cypress, and eucalyptus; 2) Thinning spruce forest across a non-contiguous 6 acres which includes the felling of multiple trees over 38" diameter at breast height; 3) Using a Chinook helicopter to lift and move felled timber off the site for a variety of beneficial uses, including to nearby restoration sites in the Ocean Ranch restoration project and the Cock Robin Island restoration project and to the Wiyot Reservation for fire wood. Helicopter operations occur over the course of two days; 4) Thinning of spruce forest to reduce shading of understory western lily and its ecological community; 5) Experimental restoration treatments in a 6-acre experimental plot including a 3-acre prescribed fire and controlled burn, targeted high-intensity goat grazing, and reseedling with native and culturally significant plants; and 6) The removal of a barbed wire fence and the installation of a deer-proof fence around the experimental plot.

The modification will allow the construction of a public access and nature and cultural interpretative trail of approximately one mile in length, construction of a bench and picnic table and five interpretive signs along the trail. The trail will be constructed to State Parks trail standards, which will involve compacting the ground and installing a stable tread surface of up to 60 inches in width. The surface is currently anticipated to be crushed aggregate however this permit will allow for other surface types to be installed provided that they are consistent with the State Parks trails standards.

#### Tribal Consultation

Under the precious permit the County consulted with necessary archaeological and tribal organizations and coordinated with the applicant to make sure that disturbances to archaeological resources were reduced. Because Table Bluff may host a significant number of archeological resources, a condition was required that a Native American Monitor shall be present for any ground disturbing activities associated to advise the applicant of best practices if archaeological resources are discovered (**Condition of Approval #4**). This condition will remain applicable to the development of these additional improvements. The applicant shall coordinate with the Tribal Historic Preservation Officers of the Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria and the Wiyot Tribe.

#### OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The original project was referred to responsible agencies and all responding agencies either responded with no comment or recommended approval or conditions which were incorporated into the approval and carried forward into this modification. The modification was referred to the California Coastal Commission who recommended that the bench and table be constructed of untreated materials. The Bear River Band of Rohnerville Rancheria, Blue Lake Rancheria and the Wiyot Tribe were referred as well, and no response to this modification was received however the applicant has been working closely with the tribes on this project and a condition requires that a cultural monitor be present during construction activities.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

Based on a review of Planning Division reference sources and comments from all involved referral agencies, Planning staff believes that the applicant has submitted evidence in support of making all of the required findings for approval of the Coastal Development Permit, Conditional Use Permit, and Special Permit. Staff recommend that the Zoning Administrator consider the environmental effects of the NOE and concurs with the findings of the NOE.

#### ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Zoning Administrator could elect to add or delete conditions of approval. The Zoning Administrator could elect not to approve the project, or to require the applicant to submit further evidence, or modify the project. Modifications may cause potentially significant impacts, additional CEQA analysis and findings may be required. These alternatives could be implemented if the Zoning Administrator is unable to make all of the required findings. Planning Division staff have stated that the required findings in support of the proposal have been made. Consequently, Planning staff does

not recommend further consideration of either alternative.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft Resolution
  - A. Conditions of Approval
2. Site Plan
3. CEQA Documents
  - A. Notice of Exemption
  - B. Coastal Prairie Restoration Work Plan
  - C. Biological Report
4. Referral Agency Comments and Recommendations

Applicant

California Department of Fish and Wildlife  
c/o Shawn Fresz  
619 2nd Street  
Eureka, CA 95501

Owners

Same as applicant

Other Applicant

Mattole Restoration Council  
PO Box 1600  
Petrolia, CA 95558

Please contact Cliff Johnson, Planning Manager at 707-445-7541 or by email at [cjohnson@co.humboldt.ca.us](mailto:cjohnson@co.humboldt.ca.us), if you have any questions about the scheduled item.