



March 2, 2021

County of Humboldt  
Board of Supervisors  
825 5<sup>th</sup> St.  
Eureka, CA 95501

RE: Westfall Property – Williamson Act Contract cancellation & penalty fee waiver request

Dear Supervisors,

Save the Redwoods League (League) is a century-old land conservation organization committed to protecting and restoring California's redwood forests and connecting people to their peace and beauty. Based in San Francisco, since 1918, the League has protected over 200,000 acres and helped create 66 parks and reserves across the coast redwood and giant sequoia ranges.

The League currently owns nearly 4,000 acres of land across the State, including the 77-acre Westfall property in Humboldt County. The League purchased the Westfall property (8224 Elk River Road) in 2016, in collaboration with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), with the goal of transferring the property to the adjacent 7,472-acre Headwaters Forest Reserve to enhance public access opportunities. In 2019, the BLM received a Federal grant award from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) program to fund the acquisition of the property from Save the Redwoods League. Over the last two years, the two parties have cooperatively worked to transition the property into the public domain.

The Westfall property contains 24 acres of redwood forest, significant floodplain meadows, and a mile-long frontage of the imperiled Elk River, where restoration for Coho salmon habitat is underway in partnership with the BLM. The property also contains a ~1,000 square foot house and small barn, both of which have been maintained and cared for during the League's ownership through the employment of live-in caretakers. The BLM has an agency-wide policy of not accepting property that contain improvements. Due to this fact, removing the house from the League-BLM transaction is a requirement. Respecting the County's desire to preserve its housing stock, the League and BLM have searched for alternatives to demolishing the house.

The parties have engaged with the Humboldt County Planning & Building Department to arrive at the solution of creating a separate parcel for the house, nearby barn, and its immediately surrounding land. BLM would then be able to acquire the larger, vacant parcel from the League, while the League retains the smaller house parcel for subsequent sale to a private buyer. Formal surveying work is underway to create a separate parcel for the house, barn, and the surrounding ~3 acres. This solution addresses both the BLM's constraint of acquiring land without infrastructure and the County's desire to not see the house demolished.

Furthermore, the Westfall Property is currently under a Williamson Act Contract. Most of the property (~74 acres of the 77 total acres), will be a public acquisition by the BLM, which we understand is an acceptable reason for cancelling the Williamson Act Contract. The remaining ~3



acres which will contain the house, barn, and surrounding lands, will remain under Williamson Act Contract. However, this newly created parcel will not contain any viable agricultural land associated with it, and thus the League requests cancellation of the Contract, along with the waiver of any penalty fees that may be associated with the Contract cancellation.

Enclosed you will find: 1) a map depicting the property's location and adjacency to Headwaters Forest Reserve; and 2) an aerial imagery map depicting the property's land cover, which also delineates the portion of the property to be acquired by the BLM and the remaining house parcel to be sold by the League.

We greatly appreciate your consideration of our Williamson Act Contract cancellation request and waiver of associated penalty fees for the Westfall property.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Becky Bremser". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Becky Bremser  
Director of Land Protection

# WESTFALL

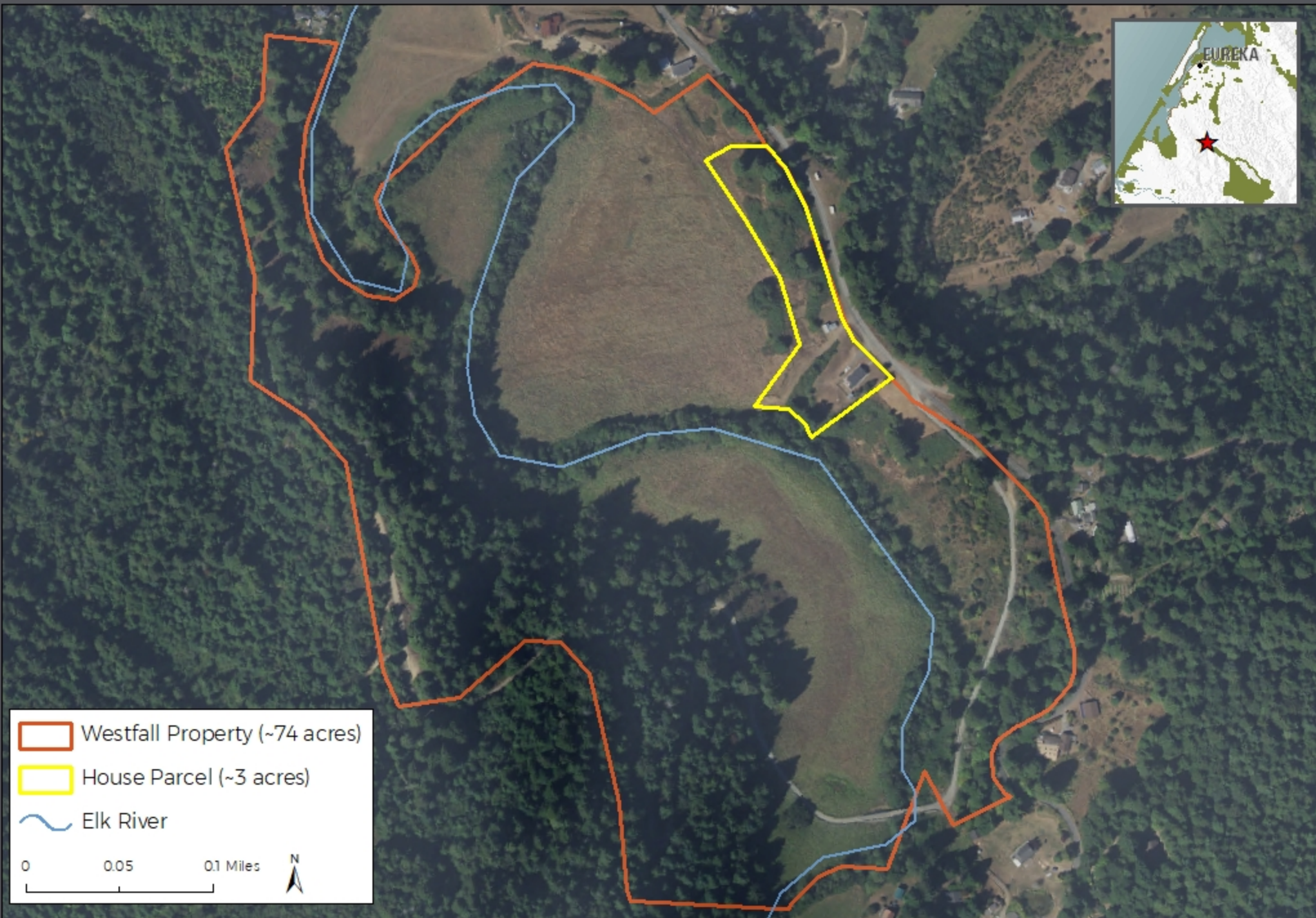
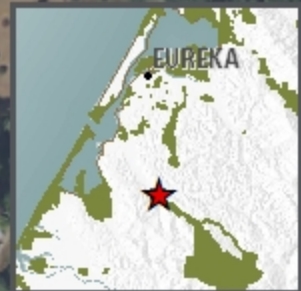
## HUMBOLDT COUNTY



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# WESTFALL HUMBOLDT COUNTY

*Save The Redwoods*  
LEAGUE



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Map produced by Save the Redwoods League  
February 2021 using ESRI software