



United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Arcata Field Office
1695 Heindon Rd
Arcata, CA 95521
www.blm.gov/california



March 8, 2021

In reply refer to:

CACA 58507
2100 (CA 330)

Via: email

County of Humboldt Planning and Building Department
Attn: Planning Commission and John Ford
3015 H Street
Eureka, CA 95501

Subject: Sale of the Save-the-Redwoods League's property in the Elk River area

To Whom it May Concern:

The purpose of this letter is to request the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors consider waiving fees related to cancellation of a Williamson Act's contract on a property in the Elk River area.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Save-the-Redwoods League (League) have been working together for many years to transfer a property into public ownership in the Elk River area. The subject assessor parcel numbers 311-021-009, 311-041-030, and 311-041-034 contain approximately 77 acres according to Humboldt County (County) records. Potential benefits of this proposed acquisition by BLM are to provide public access and connectivity with Headwaters Forest Reserve, preserve open space, and partner in collaborative watershed restoration efforts.

The BLM is currently in the process of surveying the property as the legal description does not meet federal acquisition standards. Part of this survey will create a separate, approximately 3-acre parcel that will include the existing house and barn. This smaller parcel would not be acquired by the BLM but would be retained by the League and sold separately to a private buyer. Separation of this new smaller parcel from the larger existing parcel would be necessary because it is the policy of the BLM not to acquire property with infrastructure. The League, the County and the BLM are in close coordination and understand that the house is of cultural and historical importance within the neighboring community. The County has also expressed that the house should remain part of the housing stock and not be demolished.

Currently, the entire property is encumbered by a Williamson Act contract. It is the BLM's understanding that with federal acquisition the Williamson Act will be cancelled on the larger part of the property that the BLM acquires. The remaining new parcel with the house and barn, (~3 acres) will still be under the Williamson Act contract. For the house and barn to remain at that site, the Williamson Act contract will need to be cancelled and the fees waived. If this does not happen, the house will need to be demolished prior to the BLM taking ownership of the entire property.

Demolishing the house would not only be costly to Save-the Redwoods League, disappoint the entire neighborhood, be wasteful of resources on every level but it would also leave the county with one less house on its tax rolls. The option that best fit the needs of Humboldt County, the League and BLM is to move forward with the creation of the smaller parcel with the house and barn and the cancellation of the Williamson Act contract and associated fees being waived.

The BLM is hopeful that Humboldt County can waive the Williamson Act contract cancellation fees on the remaining small parcel given that the larger parcel will become part of the public land legacy for all to enjoy.

We appreciate your consideration on the matter of waiving the cancellation fees associated with the Williamson Act. Please contact Clara Sander-McDonald, Realty Specialist at (707) 672-6334, with any questions.

Sincerely,

Molly Brown
Field Manager

cc:

Save-the-Redwoods League
c/o Adrianna Andreucci
111 Sutter Street, 11th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94104