

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

Resolution Number 26-

Record Number PLN-2025-19409

Assessor's Parcel Number: 507-282-003

Resolution by the Zoning Administrator of the County of Humboldt certifying compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act and conditionally approving the Hornsby Coastal Development Permit

WHEREAS, John and Debra Hornsby, submitted an application and evidence in support of approving a Coastal Development Permit for the installation of a replacement well; 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 project is exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15303 (New Construction and Conversion of Small Structures) of the CEQA Guidelines;

WHEREAS, Attachment 3 in the Planning Division staff report includes evidence in support of making all of the required findings for approving the proposed project (Case Number: PLN-2025-19409); and

WHEREAS, the Humboldt County Zoning Administrator held a duly noticed public hearing on March 19, 2026, and reviewed, considered, and discussed the application for the CDP and reviewed and considered all evidence and testimony presented at the hearing.

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

- 1. FINDING:** **Project Description:** A Coastal Development Permit (CDP) for the installation of a new 5" domestic water well to serve the parcel. The new well will replace an existing well that has failed. The site is developed with a single-family residence constructed under PLN-2022-17889. The site is served with on-site water (well) and on-site septic. This permit is a follow up to the Emergency Coastal Development Permit PLN-2025-19434.

EVIDENCE: a) Project File: PLN-2025-19409

2. FINDING: **CEQA:** The proposed project is statutorily exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

EVIDENCE: a) The proposed project is exempt from environmental review pursuant to Categorical Exemption Section 15303 (New Construction and Conversion of Small Structures) of the CEQA Guidelines.

FINDINGS FOR COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT

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

EVIDENCE: a) The property is designated Agriculture Exclusive under the Humboldt Bay Area Plan which allows as a principal use the development of a single-family residence provided that it can be incidental to the potential agricultural use of the property. The proposed well will support the residential and agricultural use of the property. The subject property is a legally created parcel however it is substandard to the minimum size permissible in the AE designation and is almost entirely forested except for the curtilage around the existing home. No agricultural use is currently occurring on the property, and the construction of the well will not interfere with any potential future agricultural use of the property.

b) The subject property is zoned Agriculture Exclusive (AE) which allows a single-family residence as a principal permitted use. The proposed well supports that principally permitted use.

c) The proposed replacement well is not considered a structure so therefore will comply with all required setbacks.

d) While the property is within the Alquist-Priolo Fault Hazard combing zone, according to Humboldt County Web GIS the subject parcel is located west of the mapped Alquist-Priolo Fault Hazard area. Nonetheless, the installation of a well is exempt

from the requirement to obtain a fault evaluation study per Humboldt County Code Section 22.1.6.

- e) A Cultural Resource Survey was completed by William Rich and Associates which found cultural resources in the vicinity of the proposed development but not within the footprint of the proposed residence. The study concluded that no cultural resources would be disturbed or impacted by the proposed development. The Bear River Band of Rohnerville Rancheria and the Blue Lake Rancheria both reviewed the cultural resources survey and agreed with the conclusions of the report.
- f) The property is located within a Flood Hazard Areas (F) combining zone which is intended to minimize public and private losses due to flood and tsunami conditions in specific areas of the County. According to the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map the project site is located within the mapped Floodway. The well will not raise the base flood elevation within the floodway during the occurrence of the base flood discharge and an elevation certificate by a licensed engineer or surveyor will not be required.
- g) The property is located within a Streams and Riparian Corridors Protection (R) combining zone due to its location adjacent to the Lad River. A Wetland and Other Waters Delineation report was prepared which identifies that the well is over 200 feet from the Mad River. The Wetland and Other Waters Delineation report identifies single parameter wetlands on the site to the north and east of the proposed well. The proposed well will be located a minimum of 50 feet from the mapped wetlands.

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

EVIDENCE: a) The site is designated as Agriculture Exclusive in the Humboldt Bay Area Plan which allows single family residences incidental to agricultural uses as principal uses. The project is for the replacement of a failed well with a new well.

- b) The project was referred to NWIC, Bear River Band, Blue Lake Rancheria and the Wiyot Tribe for input. After discussion with the Tribal Historic Preservation Officers of the Blue Lake Rancheria and Bear River Band, a Cultural Resources Survey was prepared by William Rich and Associates in October 2022. No artifacts, features, sites or other cultural resources were identified on the project site during the field survey or as part of the research into the property. As a result, the project is consistent with Section 3.18 of the Humboldt Bay Area Plan which requires mitigation measures where new development would adversely impact archaeological resources.

- c) A Wetland and Other Waters Delineation report was prepared by SHN which identifies that the well is over 200 feet from the Mad River. The Wetland and Other Waters Delineation report identifies single parameter wetlands on the site to the north and east of the proposed well. The proposed well will be located a minimum of 50 feet from the mapped wetlands. The proposed well is located within the Wetland Buffer Area per the Humboldt Bay Area Plan however the location of the proposed well is heavily disturbed by the existing footprint and curtilage of the existing home. Per the Wetland and Other Waters Delineation report the construction of the well in this location will not degrade the wetland or detract from the natural resource value. The report identified that the forested area to the north and west of the property also contains native California blackberry, red alder and several willow species and is therefore characterized as an Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area (ESHA) per the Humboldt Bay Area Plan. The well will be outside of the appropriate ESHA buffer and the proposed project is consistent with the Natural Resources Protection policies and standards of the Humboldt Bay Area Plan.

5. FINDING: The proposed development will not adversely impact the environment, and will not be detrimental to the public health, safety or welfare and will not be materially injurious to properties or improvements in the vicinity.

EVIDENCE: a) This project will not impact other properties or improvements; all work is proposed on the parcel and outside of the required

setbacks. The replacement of a failed well with a new well will have no adverse impact on the public health, safety and welfare.

6. FINDING: The proposed well 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) The project will not conflict with any provisions of the County Housing Element. The parcel is not identified in the housing inventory that has been utilized for HCD purposes, and the proposed development will help maintain the total amount of housing units available in the County.

7. FINDING: The proposed well will not impact sovereign lands, such as tide and submerged lands and the beds of navigable waterways, or the benefit, use and enjoyment of the public. These lands are held in trust by the State of California for the statewide public and for uses that further the purposes of the trust. The project will not impact publicly beneficial uses that connect the public to the water.

EVIDENCE: a) The well is proposed to be used for approximately 148 gallons per day, or 54,030 gallons per year for domestic uses. The well is not subject to Governor's Executive order N-3-23 because it is not within a groundwater basin subject to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act and classified as a medium or high priority and is a well that will provide less than two-acre feet per year of groundwater for an individual domestic user.

The proposed location of the well is approximately 40.9164 latitude and -124.0912 longitude and approximately 22 feet elevation above sea level. The well will have an estimated depth of 80 to 100 feet with a 5-inch casing diameter and a minimum perforation depth of 20 feet. The Mad River is the closest water body to the proposed well and is approximately 275 feet to the north-northwest. The Mad River provides recreational opportunities for swimming, boating, and fishing and flows into the Pacific Ocean. The river also provides domestic and industrial water to much of the Humboldt Bay Region. The Mad

River has been heavily modified and managed to provide community water. Ruth Lake Dam was put in place to meter water for community use. Prior to the creation of dams on the Mad River, the river would effectively dry up in the summer months. The Ranney collectors on the Mad River provide the water supply for communities and industry surrounding Humboldt Bay. The nearest collector is 2.8 miles upstream from the nearest intersecting point between the Mad river and the proposed well. The Mad River supports fisheries, including coastal cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarkii clarkii*) and steelhead trout (*O. mykiss*). Recreational boating and swimming are common activities on the Mad River. Given the proximity of the well to the Mad river, the possibility of hydrological connection to the adjacent water-bearing alluvium exists. However, the well is a replacement well, and no new impacts to public trust resources are anticipated.

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 Coastal Development Permit based upon the Findings and Evidence and subject to the conditions of approval attached hereto as Attachment 1 and incorporated herein by reference; and

Adopted after review and consideration of all the evidence on **March 19, 2026**.

I, John 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, Zoning Administrator,
Planning and Building Department