



May 29, 2009

TO: ALL INTERESTED PARTIES

SUBJECT: NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF THE FAIRFAX CONVERSION PROJECT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (SCH# 2004082094)

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) to consider the potential environmental effects of approving a Timberland Conversion Permit and Timber Harvesting Plan for the proposed Fairfax Conversion Project. The 190-acre project site is located on a broad, flat ridge (Beatty Ridge) between Grasshopper Creek and the Wheatfield Fork of the Gualala River, approximately 0.5 to 0.75 miles southeast of the town of Annapolis and five miles east of the Pacific Ocean. The site is located within Sections 17 and 18, T10N, R13W, MDB&M, and is found on the U.S. Geological Survey 7.5 minute *Annapolis* quadrangle. The project site consists of Sonoma County Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APNs) 123-040-022, -024, and -027, occupying a total area of approximately 324 acres.

If approved the applicant proposes to develop the project site as follows (all acreages are approximate): the 190-acre project site would consist of a 135-acre net vineyard, 23-acres of perimeter avenues, a 9-acre reservoir and sump, 2-acres of driveways and roads, a 1-acre corporation yard, and 20-acres of graded perimeter slopes. Approximately 171 acres of the 190-acre total would be converted from young-growth timber (redwood and Douglas-fir) to vineyard, under the conditions of a Timberland Conversion Permit (TCP) issued by CAL FIRE. The timber harvesting activities on the site would adhere to the California Forest Practice Rules and are described in detail in a Timber Harvest Plan (THP) prepared for the applicant by a state-licensed Registered Professional Forester (RPF). The actual logging would be performed by a state-certified Licensed Timber Operator (LTO).

The proposed project also includes the establishment of a permanent deed restriction over approximately 134 acres of land composed of the south-draining tributaries to Patchett Creek in the central portion of the site, and additional biologically rich or culturally significant areas. In addition, project implementation would require the construction of temporary tractor roads and landings used for timber harvesting activities. The temporary roads and landings used for timber operations, as well as most of the currently existing unpaved roads on the site, would be removed upon completion of the timber harvest.

The DEIR found significant impacts related to air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology, hydrology and water quality, hazards, transportation and circulation, and noise. All of these impacts were reduced to a less-than-significant level through the implementation of mitigation measures.

Beginning on May 29, 2009 the DEIR and other project documents can be viewed at the CAL FIRE Web Site at http://www.fire.ca.gov/resource_mgt/resource_mgt_EPRP_PublicNotice.php.

Optionally you may also review the DEIR at the following facilities during normal business hours, beginning Monday June 1st:

CAL FIRE – Santa Rosa Office

135 Ridgeway Avenue
Santa Rosa, CA 95402

Santa Rosa Central Public Library

Reference Counter
3rd and E Streets
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

Horicon Elementary School*

Main Office
35555 Annapolis Road
Annapolis, CA 95412

CAL FIRE - Sonoma-Lake-Napa Unit

West Division Headquarters
2210 West College Avenue
Santa Rosa, 95401-4909

The Draft EIR is being circulated for a 60-day public review period from Friday, May 29, 2009 through Tuesday, July 28, 2009. Written comments regarding the Draft EIR should be received by CAL FIRE **NO LATER THAN 5:00 P.M., Tuesday, July 28, 2009.**

Written comments should be submitted to:

Mr. Allen Robertson
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
P.O. Box 944246
Sacramento, CA 94244-2460
SacramentoPublicComment@fire.ca.gov

In addition, a public meeting to receive verbal comments on DEIR is scheduled to be held on June 27, 2009, 1:00 to 3:00pm, at Horicon Elementary School, 35555 Annapolis Road, Annapolis, CA 95412. The purpose of this meeting is to provide the public with some general information on the content of the DEIR, to update the public on the project approval process and to receive verbal comments from the public on the adequacy of the DEIR. All verbal and written comments will be responded to in the Final EIR document, which will be prepared after the close of the 60-day public review period.

In addition, CAL FIRE must approve a Timber Harvest Plan (THP) prior to the commencement of timber operations for this project. The THP (THP # 1-09-058-SON) cannot be approved until the Timberland Conversion Permit has been issued. Per CEQA, the timberland conversion and all subsequent permits are considered part of the same project. The THP associated with this conversion has a public comment period that is required pursuant to the California Forest Practice Act and Rules. Additional information about the THP review process is available at:

http://www.fire.ca.gov/resource_mgt/resource_mgt_forestpractice_thpreviewprocess.php

The public is encouraged to comment on the DEIR, the THP or both. The status of the THP and the close of the THP comment period may be determined by contacting:

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
135 Ridgeway
Santa Rosa, CA 95402
(707) 576-2959

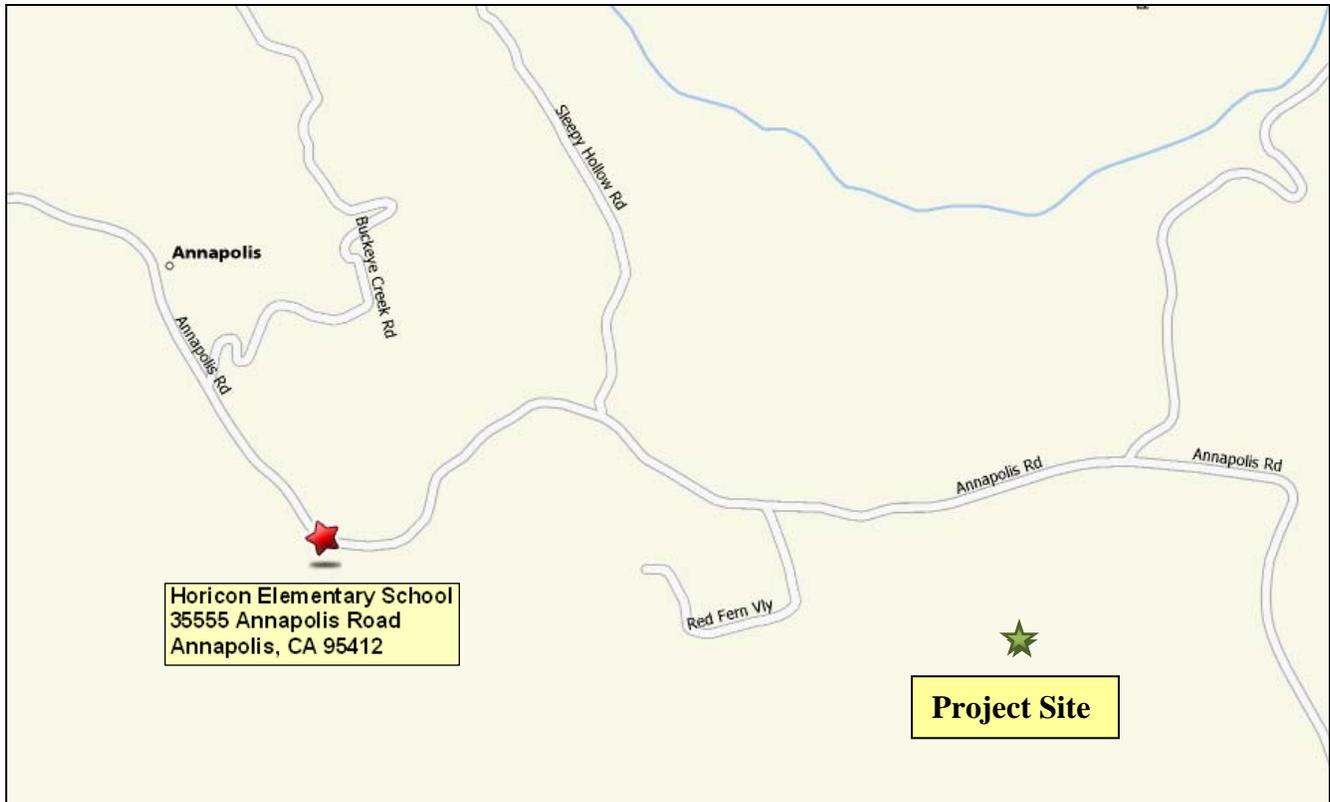
Or by viewing the Timber Harvesting Plan Status table at:

<http://www.fire.ca.gov/ResourceManagement/THPStatusUpload/THPStatusTable.html>

Public comments on the THP may be emailed to:

Email: santarosapubliccomment@fire.ca.gov

The public may comment on either the Timberland Conversion and/or the Timber Harvesting Plan phases of the project. CAL FIRE will recognize all comments received as being comments on the overall project regardless of which office the comments were submitted and regardless of which comment period was open at the time. All comments received prior to the close of the latest comment period will be considered prior to TCP or THP approval.



*Please note that school is not in session during the entire public review period. The DEIR will be available for review purposes only at the Horicon Elementary School office as follows: June 1-5 and 8-12 from 8:30am to 4:30pm; and June 15-19 from 8:30am to 3:30pm.