



March 14, 2011

TO: ALL INTERESTED PARTIES

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

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) has prepared a Partially Recirculated Draft Environmental Impact Report (RDEIR) to update two DEIR sections: Chapter 3.5, *Cultural Resources*; and Impact Discussion 4-3, *Cumulative Contribution to Global Climate Change*, in the Cumulative Impacts chapter. In response to comments, CAL FIRE has added some additional discussion and analysis to these two DEIR sections, and while no new impacts have been identified as a result, CAL FIRE has decided to recirculate them separately from the original Draft EIR (released on May 29, 2009) for a full 45-day period.

The proposed project, as originally described in the May 2009 draft EIR, would result in the development of an approximately 173-acre vineyard site located in the County of Sonoma, approximately 0.5 to 0.75 miles southeast of the town of Annapolis and five miles east of the Pacific Ocean. The Fairfax Conversion Project is located on a broad, flat ridge (Beatty Ridge) between Grasshopper Creek and the Wheatfield Fork of the Gualala River. The site is located on three parcels, identified by County of Sonoma Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APNs) 123-040-022, -024, and -027, occupying a total area of approximately 324 acres.

Since the release of the original DEIR, the applicant has modified the project description, which generally has resulted in a reduction in the plantable vineyard area. These changes are described comparatively in Chapter 1, *Introduction*, of the RDEIR. If approved the applicant now proposes to develop the project site as follows (all acreages are approximate): the 173-acre work area would consist of a 116-acre net vineyard, 18 acres of perimeter avenues, a nine acre reservoir and sump, two acres of driveways and roads, a one acre corporation yard, and 27 acres of non-vineyard uses. Approximately 154 acres of the 173-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 151 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 project's roads and landings, as well as most of the currently existing unpaved roads on the site, would be removed upon completion of the timber harvest.

The additional cultural resources and climate change analysis carried out in the RDEIR did not identify any new project impacts above and beyond that which was previously identified and disclosed in the original DEIR. For cultural resources, all of the previously identified potentially significant impacts can still be reduced to a less-than-significant level through the implementation of mitigation measures. For climate change, the original DEIR's conclusion remains valid – that is, the proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact to global climate change.

Beginning on March 14, 2011 the RDEIR 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. (see “Fairfax Conversion Project”).

Optionally you may also review the RDEIR at the following facilities during normal business hours, beginning Monday March 14:

CAL FIRE – Santa Rosa Office

135 Ridgway Avenue
Santa Rosa, CA 95401

Horicon Elementary School

Main Office
35555 Annapolis Road
Annapolis, CA 95412

Santa Rosa Central Public Library

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

CAL FIRE - Sonoma-Lake-Napa Unit

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

The Partially Recirculated Draft EIR is being circulated for a 45-day public review period from Monday, March 14, 2011 through Wednesday April 27, 2011. Written comments regarding the Draft EIR should be received by CAL FIRE **NO LATER THAN 5:00 P.M., Wednesday, April 27, 2011.**

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

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15088.5, subdivision (f)(2), CAL FIRE directs that public comments must be restricted to the newly circulated information contained in the RDEIR related to Cultural Resources, and specifically, within the Cumulative Impacts chapter, the subject of Climate Change – Impact Statement 4-3. All comments will be responded to in the Final EIR document, which will be completed after the close of the 45-day public review period. It should be noted that this Final EIR document will also include responses to all previously submitted comments on the original DEIR.

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 RDEIR, 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 95401
(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.

