



# COUNTY OF SONOMA

575 ADMINISTRATION  
DRIVE, ROOM 102A  
SANTA ROSA, CA 95403

## SUMMARY REPORT

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**Agenda Date:** 12/12/2023

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**To:** Board of Supervisors

**Department or Agency Name(s):** Permit Sonoma

**Staff Name and Phone Number:** Jen Chard, Planner II (707) 565-2336

**Vote Requirement:** Majority

**Supervisorial District(s):** One

**Title:**

File No. AGP22-0004 Crane Family Replacement Contract; 5976 Petaluma Hill Road, Santa Rosa

**Recommended Action:**

Adopt a Resolution to mutually rescind and replace two Non-Prime Land Conservation Act contract with a Non-Prime Land Conservation (Williamson) Act Contract and Land Conservation Plan on a 91.95 acre parcel, for a non-prime property located at 5976 Petaluma Hill Road, Santa Rosa; APN 045-271-024 and 045-263-007; PRMD File No. AGP22-0004; Supervisorial District 1 and authorize the Chair to execute the Contract.

**Executive Summary:**

Sonoma County's Land Conservation Act program has four contract types: a) Prime contracts for crop agriculture with a 10-acre minimum parcel size requirement; b) Non-Prime contracts for grazing with a 40-acre minimum; c) Open Space contracts with a 40-acre minimum, and d) Hybrid contracts with a mix of agricultural and/or open space also with a 40-acre minimum. This action is to replace two Non-prime Land Conservation Contracts with a non-prime contract that corresponds with new property line boundaries and current open space and agricultural uses consistent with a previously approved Voluntary Merger (VMG22-0008). Land Conservation Act contracts assist in the preservation of agricultural and open space lands throughout Sonoma County. In exchange for retaining land in agriculture and/or open space, the landowner receives reduced property taxes. Staff recommends the Board of Supervisors approve the rescind and replace contract request.

**Discussion:**

Thomas Crane seeks approval of a replacement Land Conservation Contract for a 91.95-acre parcel located within Agricultural Preserve Area Number 2-382, to execute a single contract on the merged parcel resulting from a Voluntary Merger processed on June 27, 2022 (VMG22-0008). This action would replace the two existing non-prime Land Conservation contract with a non-prime Land Conservation contract that corresponds with the new property line boundaries.

**Site Characteristics:**

The project site is located east of Petaluma Hill Road and approximately one-half mile east of the City of Rohnert Park. The project site contains approximately 89.34 acres of grazing land and three barns. The subject parcel is zoned Diverse Agriculture (DA), 20-acre density with 3 acre minimum lot size (B6 20/3 (ac/DU)/Ac MIN) with combining districts for local guidelines for Taylor/Sonoma/Mayacamas Mountains (LG/MTN), Riparian Corridor with 100 ft setback (RC100/50), Scenic Resource (SR) and Valley Oak Habitat (VOH).

**Background:**

The subject parcels have been under two non-prime Land Conservation contracts, APN 045-271-024 since 1996 (contract #96-080735) and APN 045-263-007 since 1972 (Book 2607, Page 887). On June 27, 2022 Permit Sonoma approved Voluntary Merger, VMG22-0008, for the subject site. The Voluntary Merger requires that the landowner rescind the existing Land Conservation Act contracts and replace them with one new contract for the reconfigured parcel in accordance with the Uniform Rules (refer to Attachment D).

**Uniform Rules:**

As part of the Board of Supervisors' December 2011 update of the *Sonoma County Uniform Rules for Agricultural Preserves and Farmland Security Zones* ("Uniform Rules") the Board eliminated the distinction between Prime (Type I) and Non-Prime (Type II) Agricultural Preserves. This allows the County to enter into either a Prime or Non-Prime contract in any established Preserve. The subject property is within Agricultural Preserve Area Number 2-382.

Also, as part of the update of the Uniform Rules, the County implemented a Land Conservation Plan which is incorporated into Land Conservation (Williamson) Act Contracts. Land Conservation Plans show locations for open space, agricultural, permitted, and compatible land uses on contracted land. Future changes to the Land Conservation Plan may be approved by the Director of Permit Sonoma and recorded on title of the subject parcel.

New Land Conservation (Williamson) Act Contract:

To be eligible for a new Non-Prime Williamson Act contract, the subject parcel must be at least 40 acres in size, have 50% of the total parcel dedicated to a qualifying agricultural use and meet the minimum income requirements of the Williamson Act. The subject parcel is 91.95 acres in size and has 89.34 acres (97%) of land devoted to a grazing operation. The grazing operation is projected to provide sufficient income to meet the minimum requirements and therefore qualifies for a Land Conservation Act contract for prime agricultural land.

**Staff Recommendation:**

Staff recommends the Board approve the request to rescind and replace the existing non-prime contracts with a new non-prime contract because all of the state and local requirements for the replacement request on the 91.95 acre parcel within the existing Agricultural Preserve have been met.

**Strategic Plan:**

Not Applicable

**Racial Equity:**

**Was this item identified as an opportunity to apply the Racial Equity Toolkit?**

No

**Prior Board Actions:**

- A. 12/13/2011: Board approves the Sonoma County Uniform Rules for Agricultural Preserves and Farmland Security Zones (Resolution No. 11-0678)
- B. 07/31/2012: Board amends the Sonoma County Uniform Rules for Agricultural Preserves and Farmland Security Zones (Resolution No. 12-0379)
- C. 05/07/2013: Board amends the Sonoma County Uniform Rules for Agricultural Preserves and Farmland

- Security Zones (Resolution No. 13-0186)
- D. 12/20/2016: Board amends the Sonoma County Uniform Rules for Agricultural Preserves and Farmland Security Zones (Resolution No. 16-0485)
- E. 10/31/2017: Board amends the Sonoma County Uniform Rules for Agricultural Preserves and Farmland Security Zones (Resolution No. 17-0426)
- F. 11/07/2017: Board amends the Sonoma County Uniform Rules for Agricultural Preserves and Farmland Security Zones (Resolution No. 17-0438)

**FISCAL SUMMARY**

Not Applicable

**Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:**

No fiscal impacts as a result of this action. Prior to the action the property is restricted under the County's Land Conservation Act Program. After the action, the property will continue to be restricted under that program, with the same tax implications. The only difference is that instead of two contracts restricting two parcels, this action will result in one contract restricting one parcel, following the prior merger of the two parcels.

**Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):**

Not Applicable

**Attachments:**

- ATT 1 AGP22-0004 Board of Supervisors Resolution
- ATT 2 AGP22-0004 Land Conservation Contract
- ATT 3 AGP22-0004 Proposal Statement prepared by Applicant
- ATT 4 AGP22-0004 Site Plan
- ATT 5 AGP22-0004 Assessor's Parcel Map

**Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:**

Not Applicable