



SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 4/22/2025

To: Sonoma County Board of Supervisors

Department or Agency Name(s): Permit Sonoma

Staff Name and Phone Number: Tennis Wick (707) 565-1925, Robert Pennington (707) 565-1352

Vote Requirement: Majority

Supervisory District(s): Fourth

Title:

11:00 A.M. - File No. PLP23-0014, Russian River Floodplain Restoration Project

Recommended Action:

Conduct a public hearing and:

A) Adopt a Resolution that:

- i) Approves a Use Permit for the floodplain restoration within the riparian corridor of the Russian River, and development and operation of a public park with day-use parking, trail system, and campground with walk-in and boat-in access only, subject to Conditions of Approval.
- ii) Amends the General Plan Land Use Map to change land use designations for APNs 066-300-011, 110-110-015 and 110-110-016 from Land Intensive Agriculture (LIA) to Land Extensive Agriculture (LEA).
- iii) Finds the Project statutorily exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act under California Public Resources Code Section 21080.56, Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects.

B) Adopt an Ordinance amending the Official Zoning Database to rezone parcels APNs 066-300-011, 110-110-015, and 110-110-016 from base zoning of LIA to LEA; and remove the Mineral Resource (MR) combining district from APNs 066-300-049, 066-300-027, 066-300-011, 066-290-049, and 110-110-016.

Executive Summary:

The Russian River Floodplain Restoration Project (Project) proposes to restore a functional floodplain within former gravel mining pits along the Russian River. The project footprint is approximately 358-acres along the east bank of the Russian River near the Town of Windsor, centered around four large remnant gravel mining pits commonly referred to as the Hanson Pits. The Hanson Pits are currently problematic for numerous reasons related to geomorphic stability, water quality, and ecology. From 2012 through 2015, a large-scale restoration design was developed and documented in the Hanson Russian River Ponds Floodplain Restoration: Feasibility Study and Conceptual Design (see Attachment 13).

This Project proposes to implement the restoration design of the Feasibility Study. More specifically, the Project proposes to regrade the site, fill the mining pits, and restore a floodplain ecosystem for the benefit of

native flora and fauna, including federally listed salmonids. The Project also incorporates public access amenities that are incidental to the primary restoration objectives. Proposed public access includes day-use parking accessed from Eastside Road, a perimeter multi-use trail, a seasonal nature trail, and a small boat-in/walk-in campground with river access.

The Project also proposes changes in land use and zoning of certain project parcels to allow for public access and campground uses (See Attachments 2 and 4). General Plan land use and base zoning is proposed to be changed from Land Intensive Agriculture (LIA) to Land Extensive Agriculture (LEA) for APNs 066-300-011, 110-110-015 and 110-110-016. The Mineral Resource (MR) combining district is proposed to be removed from APNs 066-300-049, 066-300-027, 066-300-011, 066-290-049, and 110-110-016. Removal of the MR combining district from project parcels reflects the prohibition of future terrace mining along the Russian River.

The Project has been analyzed under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations. Staff reviewed project materials and determined the Project qualifies as statutorily exempt under California Public Resources Code Section 21080.56 - Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects. A concurrence letter signed by the Director of California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) was published on CDFW's website on May 28, 2024 (See Attachment 12).

On December 5, 2024, the Planning Commission held a public hearing and voted 5-0-0 to recommend that the Board of Supervisors approve the Project (See Attachments 5 and 6).

Discussion:

Project Site and Context

The floodplain restoration site is located at 10251 Eastside Road in an unincorporated agricultural area of Sonoma County, about 2 miles west of the Town of Windsor, within flood prone areas of the Russian River. The 358-acre project footprint intersects 22 parcels and includes four large open water mining pits, levees, historic gravel processing areas, and riparian areas. No vineyard or other existing agricultural area is proposed to be removed or disturbed because of the restoration project. Surrounding land uses include riparian areas and vineyards with zoning of LIA, LEA, Diverse Agriculture (DA), with densities of 20, 30, and 60 acres per dwelling unit.

Background:

The core project parcels were used for aggregate extraction from the 1950's through 2002. Four pits were mined for sand and gravel from the alluvial terrace; these pits are collectively referred to as the Hanson Pits and include the Richardson, Vimark, Mariani, and Piombo pits (See Table 1 below). Mine and reclamation plans required by Sonoma County's Surface Mining and Reclamation Ordinance (SMARO) and the State Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA) were last approved or substantially amended for each of the Hanson Pits in the 1990s. The Hanson Pits have been largely reclaimed to the approved end use of wildlife habitat. See reclamation status in Table 1. Of the 358-acre project area, approximately 10% (29 acres) of the

Mariani and Piombo terrace pits does not meet performance standards of existing reclamation plans.

Note, reclamation to wildlife habitat is not synonymous with ecologic restoration, and the quality of wildlife habitat under reclamation standards may be marginal.

Table 1. Reclamation status of historic mine sites intersecting the project site.

Terrace Pit	State Mine ID	End Use	Reclamation Status
Richardson Pit	91-49-0054	Wildlife Habitat	Reclaimed - Released in 2022
Vimark Pit	91-49-0057 and 91-49-0061	Wildlife Habitat	Reclaimed - Released in 2012
Mariani Pit	91-49-0051	Wildlife Habitat - open water pit with riparian, wetland, and oak savannah habitat	Reclamation in Progress - 29-acre area intersecting both Mariani and Piombo pits does not meet reclamation standards for revegetation and requires a hydraulic control structure.
Piombo Pit	91-49-0003	Wildlife Habitat - open water pit with riparian, wetland, and oak savannah habitat	Reclamation in Progress - 29-acre area intersecting both Mariani and Piombo pits does not meet reclamation standards for revegetation and requires a hydraulic control structure.

The reclamation plans approved in the 1990s allowed for the Hanson Pits to remain as open water ponds separated by levees. Though consistent with the approved reclamation plans these water bodies are considered problematic for many reasons: the pits are geomorphically unstable (i.e. the river has potential to shift location and reroute itself through the pits), impair water quality, and are harmful ecologically.

In 2009, to discuss challenges and opportunities for restoration of terrace pits, the Russian River Pit Symposium sponsored by NOAA National Marine Fisheries and Service and Syar Industries brought together scientists, managers, and industry representatives. The goals were to review and compile current knowledge, to identify research questions and needs, and to provide a direction for planners and regulatory agencies on how to most effectively manage gravel pits for the future benefit of the watershed. From 2012 through 2015, a large-scale floodplain restoration design was developed with input from a multi-agency and multi-disciplinary team, and documented in the *Hanson Russian River Ponds Floodplain Restoration: Feasibility Study and Conceptual Design* (see Attachment 13). This Project proposes to implement the restoration design of the Feasibility Study, and proposes to regrade the site, fill the mining pits, and restore a functional floodplain ecosystem that will have ecological benefits including creation of beneficial habitat for federally listed salmonids.

The project applicant is Endangered Habitats Conservancy (EHC). EHC has an option to purchase the Hanson owned core project parcels (all previously mined parcels currently owned by Hanson Aggregates Mid-Pacific, Inc.) and proceed with restoration in coordination with adjacent landowners. Once restoration is complete, EHC has stated that they would like to transfer title of EHC owned parcels to Sonoma County Regional Parks, or another entity that would maintain and operate the public park and campground.

Project Description:

The Russian River Floodplain Restoration Project proposes to restore a functional floodplain at a former gravel quarry of approximately 358 acres on private land along the middle reach Russian River near Windsor. The Project is designed for ecological benefit, flood management, improved water quality, and public enjoyment. The proposal also includes limited public access including public parking off Eastside Road, multi-use trail, and small boat-in/walk-in campground.

To reflect the closure of the mining operation and allow for public access and campground uses, the Mineral Resources (MR) combining district is proposed to be removed from APNs 066-300-049, 066-300-027, 066-300-011, 066-290-049, and 110-110-016; and the General Plan land use and base zoning is proposed to be changed from Land Intensive Agriculture (LIA) to Land Extensive Agriculture (LEA) for APNs 066-300-011, 110-110-015 and 110-110-016.

General Plan and Zoning Discussion

General Plan Consistency:

All project parcels are currently designated Land Intensive Agriculture (LIA) in the General Plan, as shown in [Figure LU-2c](#)

<https://permitsonoma.org/regulationsandlongrangeplans/longrangeplans/generalplan/organizationandoverview/landuseelement/landuseelementmaps/landusehealdsburgandenvirons> (map of Land Use Planning Area 3 - Healdsburg and Environs). The General Plan identifies a “planned park” within the Project footprint, as shown in [Figure OSCR-5c](#)

<https://permitsonoma.org/regulationsandlongrangeplans/longrangeplans/generalplan/organizationandoverview/openspaceandresourceconservation/openspaceandresourceconservationmaps/openspacehealdsburgandenvirons> (map of Open Space: Healdsburg and Environs). The General Plan identifies the Russian River Trail within the Project footprint, as shown in [Figure CT-1c](#)

<https://permitsonoma.org/regulationsandlongrangeplans/longrangeplans/generalplan/organizationandoverview/circulationandtransit/circulationandtransitmaps/plannedroadandhighwayimprovementshealdsburgandenvirons> (map of Planned Road and Highway Improvements: Healdsburg and Environs).

Staff has determined the project is consistent with the goals, objectives, and policies of the General Plan and related Aggregate Resources Management (ARM) Plan, based on the following analysis.

Floodplain Restoration

The floodplain restoration project proposes to enhance ecosystem function of previously mined terrace pits. The Project is consistent with many policies of the Open Space Element and Water Resources Element that call for the protection and enhancement of riparian areas and water resources. The Project is also consistent with reclamation priorities of the ARM Plan to restore terrace pit sites to become productive habitat for fish, birds,

and other wildlife.

The project area is designated in the General Plan as Land Intensive Agriculture. Per General Plan Policy AR-4a, the primary use of each parcel should be agricultural production and related processing, support services, and visitor serving uses. For the core project parcels and parcels that largely overlap the riparian zone of the Russian River, no agricultural uses currently exist, nor are they proposed. Thus, there is an apparent inconsistency between the Project and Policy AR-4a. However, Policy AR-4a is intended to minimize loss of farmland and minimize conflict with nonagricultural uses. Policy AR-4a stems from Goal AR-4 which states, "Allow farmers to manage their operations in an efficient, economic manner with minimal conflict with nonagricultural uses." The Project does not remove any agricultural lands from production, and floodplain restoration does not conflict with nor impact agricultural uses. The project may benefit nearby agricultural sites by reducing flood elevations and stabilizing the river system. The Project's public access and campground are of small scale and designed to limit potential for conflict with surrounding agricultural sites. Thus, the Project is found to be consistent with Goal AR-4a and General plan policies to preserve agricultural resources. In addition, the permanent loss of agricultural capacity resulting from historic mining was approved through discretionary mine and reclamation permits and found consistent with the General Plan and Sonoma County's 1994 Aggregate Resources Management Plan (ARM Plan). Loss of agricultural land was contemplated by the ARM Plan and programmatic EIR, determined to be a significant unavoidable impact of terrace mining, and approved with overriding considerations of public benefit. Thus, conversion of agricultural land to wildlife habitat was considered and approved with the mining use permits on the core project parcels in the 1990s and earlier. The restoration Project maintains the previously authorized end-use of the site for wildlife habitat.

Public Park and Associated Uses

The General Plan Open Space Element identifies a public park at the approximate location of the project site ([Figure OSRC-5c](#)

<https://permitsonoma.org/regulationsandlongrangeplans/longrangeplans/generalplan/organizationandoverview/openspaceandresourceconservation/openspaceandresourceconservationmaps/openspacehealdsburgandenvirons>). The Russian River Waterway Trail extends along the middle reach of the Russian River adjacent to the site ([Figure OSRC-3](#)

<https://permitsonoma.org/regulationsandlongrangeplans/longrangeplans/generalplan/organizationandoverview/openspaceandresourceconservation/openspaceandresourceconservationmaps/openspacetrails>; map of [Open Space: Trails](#)).

The Project would allow for the development of a public park with modest public access amenities as contemplated by the General Plan. The Project's proposed day-use parking, multi-use trail, small campground, and boat-portage advance the public park and waterway trail specified in the General Plan. The multi-use trail is also consistent with the Class I Russian River Trail specified in the Sonoma County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. North and South day-use parking areas are small with less than 50 parking spaces each and are located near Eastside Road approximately 2,500 feet from the Russian River. The campground and boat-portage trail will support the Russian River Waterway Trail. The proposed footprint of parking, campground, and trails will cover approximately 3% of the total Project area and the visitor serving uses are subordinate to the habitat and floodplain restoration of the Project, as well as the surrounding agricultural operations.

The project site has a general plan land use designation and zoning of LIA and proposes a general plan amendment and rezone to LEA of the campground and boat portage trail parcels. The change is proposed to accommodate the campground use which is prohibited in LIA. The proposed amendment from LIA to LEA is consistent with the General Plan because the project site is not currently in agricultural production and does not contain land suitable for intensive agricultural production due to its location along the Russian River and its historical use for mining.

Considering the historical use of the property for mining, the specified reclamation end use of wildlife habitat,

the limited scope of proposed recreational uses, and the ecological enhancement and flood hazard mitigation that will ultimately benefit adjacent agricultural uses, the Project is, on balance, consistent and compatible with the General Plan's overarching goals and policies.

Zoning Consistency:

The base zoning for all project parcels is currently LIA, and only parcels proposed for the campground and boat-portage trail are proposed to be rezoned to LEA. As discussed in the General Plan consistency section above, the floodplain restoration project proposes to enhance ecosystem function of previously mined terrace pits. No loss of existing or potential agricultural land is proposed.

Areas zoned LIA allow for "Land and Resource Development" and "Public parks and playgrounds" as permitted uses if:

The use meets a local need;

The use avoids conflict with agricultural activities; and

The use is consistent with general plan objectives AR-4.1 and policy AR-4a.

Staff have determined that the public access amenities meet a local need. This is reinforced by the identification of a park at the project site in the General Plan and is supported by Sonoma County Regional Parks staff. The Project has been designed to minimize conflicts with agriculture through limited scale, controlled access, and setbacks. The Project is considered consistent with general plan objectives AR-4.1 and policy AR-4a intended to maintain agricultural uses.

Areas zoned LEA allow for campgrounds of up to 30 sites with a conditional use permit if the review authority finds that the use is consistent with general plan policy AR-6f and other applicable provisions of the general plan. The Project proposes to rezone campground parcels to LEA to allow for development of a small seasonal campground. As discussed in the General Plan consistency section above, the campground use is considered consistent with policy AR-6f that specifies consideration of the following factors:

Whether the above uses would result in joint road access conflicts, or in traffic levels that exceed the Circulation and Transit Element's objectives for level of service on a site specific and cumulative basis.

Whether the above uses would draw water from the same aquifer and be located within the zone of influence of area wells.

Whether the above uses would be detrimental to the rural character of the area.

Staff have determined that the proposed campground is consistent with zoning in consideration of the above factors. Campground access is designed to avoid joint road access conflicts, does not propose to use groundwater, is limited in size to 30 sites, and will not be detrimental to the rural character of the area.

The MR combining district is proposed to be removed from certain project parcels. The MR district is intended to be applied only where consistent with the ARM Plan. Per the ARM Plan, terrace mining is no longer a permitted form of mining. Thus, removal of MR from parcels is considered appropriate and consistent with the zoning code. Removal of MR zoning will reduce confusion as to whether terrace mining is an allowed use.

The Riparian Corridor combining district (RC) has a corridor width of 200 feet along the Russian River and

overlaps the project site and many project parcels. Restoration grading may be approved with a use permit within the RC if a conservation plan is adopted that provides for the appropriate protection of the biotic resources, water quality, floodplain management, bank stability, groundwater recharge, and other applicable riparian functions. The project application materials contain the conservation plan elements listed above.

Many project parcels are zoned floodway (F1) and/or floodplain (F2). No structures are proposed within the floodway. Only floodproof vault toilets for campground and day-use parking areas are proposed for areas zoned F2. Hydraulic and geomorphic analysis included in the application materials indicate that the Project will increase long term stability of the channel, increase the carrying capacity of the floodway, and reduce flood elevations.

Other combining zones would remain for certain project parcels including Valley Oak Habitat and Oak Woodland. The project complies with the requirements of these combining districts as it proposes ecologic restoration and replanting of upland areas to oak woodland and oak savannah habitats.

California Environmental Review Act (CEQA)

The Project has been analyzed under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations. Staff reviewed project materials and determined the Project qualifies for a statutory exemption under California Public Resources Code Section 21080.56 Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects.

The Project goals are to conserve, restore, protect, or enhance, and assist in the recovery of California native fish and wildlife, and the habitat upon which they depend, and is a project to restore or provide habitat for California native fish and wildlife. The Project enhances connectivity between the Russian River and floodplain, restoring riverine processes to benefit native species including Central California Coast (CCC) coho salmon, CCC steelhead, and California Coastal (CC) Chinook salmon. The Project includes incidental public benefits with public access through a trail system and seasonal campground. The Project results in long-term net benefits to climate resiliency, biodiversity, and sensitive species recovery; and application materials include procedures for ongoing management for the protection of the environment. Conditions of approval require a 5-year minimum monitoring and adaptive management plan.

A concurrence letter signed by the Director of CDFW was published on CDFW's website on May 28, 2024, and was thereafter sent to and received by the County of Sonoma by email on June 6, 2024 (Attachment 12).

Public Comments:

Letters of Support

Permit Sonoma received public comment letters in support of the project (prior to publication of this staff report) from the following individuals, groups, and agencies:

- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service

- California Trout
- The Nature Conservancy
- Trout Unlimited
- Russian Riverkeeper
- North Bay Jobs with Justice
- Sierra Club, Redwood Chapter
- State Coastal Conservancy
- Russian River Fly Fishers

Letters and Issues of Concern

John Moulton - various concerns

Mr. Moulton expressed concerns including: 1) filling of ponds would eliminate dip sites for fire prevention; 2) elevated fire risk associated with a campground; 3) import of earthen material to fill the ponds; and 4) cost. Issues pertaining to fire have been considered. A residual pond of approximately 45-acre feet will remain and may serve as a dip site. The campground will have access meeting Sonoma County Fire Safe Standards, and an onsite water storage tank for fire suppression. Conditions of approval require compliance with Fire Code Regulation and inspection, and an emergency response plan meeting California Fire Code prior to public access. At least four wildfires have started on the project site since 2020, presumably in relation to trespassing including unsanctioned camping with bonfires. The proposed regulated condition with controlled access and fire safe standards is expected to reduce fire risk compared to the current unregulated condition.

Concern regarding import of fill is related to a misunderstanding of the Project. The Project is designed such that cut and fill balances and import of material for filling of the pits is unnecessary. Import of fill has many downsides including high cost and traffic as well as greenhouse gas impacts. The Project is expected to use small volumes of construction materials including riprap, topsoil, and soil amendments. Conditions of approval prohibit import of large volumes of material for filling of the pits.

Jackson Family - Water Rights

Email correspondence and a series of meetings were held with representatives of Jackson Family. Jackson Family owns vineyards adjacent to the Project. Jackson Family expressed concerns regarding maintaining existing surface water diversions and riparian water right (Water Right ID #S015459). The project has been designed to accommodate diversion infrastructure operated by Jackson Family. Conditions of approval #13 and #14 were formulated with input from Jackson Family to provide a reasonable guarantee that their water supply and water rights will not be negatively impacted by the Project.

Jackson Family - Site Access

In email correspondence and meetings, Jackson Family has expressed opposition to the shared access

proposed under South Driveway Access “Option A”, and expressed support for “Option B” (see Attachment 10, Public Access Plans - Sheet 1 for options). The project applicant has agreed to pursue “Option B” contingent on Jackson Family providing an access easement for development of and use of “Option B”. Condition of approval #26 was formulated with input from Jackson Family to address this concern. It is staff’s understanding that issues of concern related to site access have been addressed to the satisfaction of Jackson Family.

Town of Windsor - Windsor Well Network

Prior to project application submittal, the applicant conducted a series of meetings with the Town of Windsor to discuss the project and concerns regarding impacts to their water well network located immediately north of the Project site near the bank of the Russian River. The Town of Windsor expressed concern that during the filling of the terrace pits, water from the pits would be displaced and could flow towards the Windsor Well field. A groundwater study dated November 2022 by Luhdorff & Scalmanini Consulting Engineers was completed and found little potential to impact the Town of Windsor’s wells. The groundwater study included recommendations for water quality monitoring and grading; these recommendations have been incorporated as conditions of approval #11 and #12.

The Town of Windsor also expressed concern about public access near their well field. To address these concerns the Project design specifies the following:

Public access to the campground along a separate parallel road from the road used to access the Town of Windsor well field.

Timer controlled or locked gates to restrict access to the campground.

A 50-foot vegetated setback from the campground from the northern property boundary near the Town of Windsor well field.

Mariani Family - Repurchase of APN 066-300-049

In 1985 the mineral rights of APN 066-300-049 (Mariani Parcel) were sold by the Mariani Brothers to Kaiser Sand and Gravel. A purchase agreement was executed with the sale, and memorandum of purchase agreement recorded (Sonoma County Record 1985087692). One provision of the purchase agreement was an option to repurchase interest in the Mariani Parcel for \$1.00 after mining, restoration, and reclamation obligations were complete. The repurchase option is currently held by Richard and Mark Mariani (Marianis). Per the Marianis and their representatives, they are unable to execute the repurchase option until the site is fully reclaimed under SMARA. The Marianis have expressed concern that the project will delay their ability to exercise the repurchase option, and that the project reduces the development potential and value of the Mariani Parcel. The Marianis also expressed concerns related to their future use of the property, should they exercise their option and obtain ownership of the property. Staff worked with the Marianis, the landowner, and applicant to address concerns, and return to your Board.

By way of background, the restoration Project does not change the end use of the Mariani Parcel. Under both

the existing reclamation plan and the proposed restoration project the end use of the site is wildlife habitat. The primary difference between reclamation and restoration is that under the reclamation plan a large open water pit would remain, while under the restoration plan areas of open water will be filled and converted to riparian habitat types.

The Project proposes the removal of MR zoning from the Mariani Parcel. Mining of the parcel was completed in 2002 and no further aggregate extraction is allowed on the parcel under the ARM Plan, thus there is no benefit to retaining MR zoning. The Marianis have not objected to the removal of MR zoning.

Public access amenities including the North Parking Area, multi-use trail segments, and nature trail are proposed for certain areas of the Mariani Parcel. Condition of approval #25 prohibits development of the North Parking Area proposed to be located near the northeast corner of the Mariani Parcel, unless:

Written agreement and consent of the holders of the repurchase option for APN 066-300-049 (currently held by members of the Mariani family) is submitted to Permit Sonoma; or,

The repurchase option has been exercised or otherwise terminates or becomes null and void.

Under Condition of approval #25, development of the North Parking Area would not occur until after the repurchase option is exercised or otherwise terminated, unless the Marianis, as holder of a repurchase option, consents and agrees to it. The intent of condition of approval #25 is to require authorization from holders of the Mariani Parcel repurchase option prior to development of the North Parking Area. This condition restricts development in the North Parking Area to preserve a site for private development for future owners, should the Marianis execute the repurchase option and become owners of the parcel.

Condition of approval #28 requires that access easements across the Mariani Parcel along the proposed multi-use trail and nature trail be recorded prior to grading permit issuance. Access easements are viewed as necessary to maintain the viability of site maintenance and public access plans, including connection between the South Day Use Parking area and campground. Should the Mariani family exercise their repurchase option, and obtain ownership of the property, this condition of approval ensures that the Mariani Parcel will be largely unencumbered except for an access easement(s) along the multi-use trail/maintenance road and trail network.

Over the last few years, several meetings were held with the Marianis. Staff has worked to draft conditions of approval that were agreeable to all parties without compromising the purpose and goals of the project. Nevertheless, the Marianis attorney, Jessica Diaz, sent an email on March 5, 2025 requesting that the Board of Supervisors' hearing for the project previously scheduled for March 11, 2025 be continued to allow for further discussion and modification of the conditions of approval. The Board received this request, as well as a supporting request from property owner Martin Marietta Materials Inc., and opted to continue the hearing to April 22, 2025.

On March 26, 2025, Permit Sonoma staff met with representatives of the Mariani Family, the applicant, and Martin Marietta Materials Inc. to discuss changes requested by the Marianis to be made to the conditions of

approval.

At the March 26th meeting Permit Sonoma staff presented adjustments to two conditions of approval that had been requested by the Marianis:

- Condition of Approval #25 - Clarified the location of the North Parking Area, and that development of the North Parking Area for the project is prohibited without approval of holders of the repurchase option, that the use permit does not restrict or prohibit “by-right” uses and development within the North Parking Area. This change was requested by the Marianis to maintain development potential of the portion of the Mariani Parcel that is currently above the floodplain and most suitable for private development.
- Condition of Approval #27 - Removed requirement for a conservation easement on the 7-acre parcel APN 066-290-050. This change was requested by the Marianis and Martin Marietta Inc. to avoid conflict with a potential private negotiation and settlement.

Permit Sonoma staff and the applicant expressed opposition to a third request of the Marianis to require construction phasing begin on the northern end of the site. This requirement is opposed because technical constraints, resource agency permits, and funding may require alternative construction phasing.

At the end of the March 26th meeting representatives of the Marianis expressed appreciation and general satisfaction with the revised conditions of approval. It is staff’s understanding that the applicant, landowner, and option holder support the proposed changes to the conditions of approval as described above.

Ledbetter Farms - Public Access

Permit Sonoma staff met with representatives of Ledbetter Farms on April 3, 2025. Ledbetter Farms Inc. owns and manages an adjacent vineyard property (APN 066-310-030) located north of the project site. At that meeting representatives of Ledbetter Farms expressed concern and opposition to public access along Fontana Road that would be used under proposed public access plans to access the North Parking Area and campground. The primary concern raised was that public access could lead to trespassing and vandalism of Ledbetter Farms vineyard and infrastructure located immediately north of the project site.

Proposed public access plans (Attachment 10) include locked and timer-controlled gates along Fontana Road, and physical barriers and vegetation to control access to adjoining parcels. It is the position of staff that the proposed regulated condition of controlled access and greater oversight by the site operator will reduce trespassing and related nuisances compared to the current unregulated condition. However, in response to concerns raised, revisions were made to condition of approval #24 that clarify and strengthen requirements to control nuisance conditions associated with public access.

Staff Recommendation:

Permit Sonoma recommends that the Board of Supervisors accept the staff report and presentation; conduct a

public hearing to accept public comments; and:

1. Adopt a resolution that:
 - a. Approves a Use Permit for the floodplain restoration within the riparian corridor of the Russian River, and development and operation of a public park with day-use parking, trail system, and campground with walk-in and boat-in access only, subject to Conditions of Approval - as shown in Attachment 3, Exhibit B to the Resolution.
 - b. Amends the General Plan Land Use Map to change land use designations for APNs 066-300-011, 110-110-015 and 110-110-016 from LIA to LEA.
 - c. Finds the Project statutorily exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act under California Public Resources Code Section 21080.56, Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects.
2. Adopt an Ordinance amending the Official Zoning Database to rezone parcels APNs 066-300-011, 110-110-015, and 110-110-016 from base zoning of LIA to LEA; and remove the MR combining district from APNs 066-300-049, 066-300-027, 066-300-011, 066-290-049, and 110-110-016.

Strategic Plan:

NA

Racial Equity:

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

No

Prior Board Actions:

3/28/1995 - Adopted a Mitigated Negative Declaration, Use Permit and Reclamation Plan to for 20-acre Mariani Terrace Pit on APN 066-300-049 (Board Resolution No. 95-0354, Permit Sonoma File No. PLP94-0126).
3/21/1996 - Adopted a Mitigated Negative Declaration, Use Permit and Master Reclamation plan for Benoist, Wilson, McLaughlin and Richardson/Argonaut Terrace Pits located on APNs 066-300-011, and 110-110-016 (Board Resolution No. 96-0024, Permit Sonoma File No. UPE95-1037).
7/16/1996 - Adopted a Mitigated Negative Declaration, Use Permit and Master Reclamation plan for Benoist, Wilson, McLaughlin and Richardson/Argonaut Terrace Pits located on APNs 066-290-052 and 066-300-027. (Board Resolution No. 96-0969, Permit Sonoma File No. PLP95-0089).
7/8/1997 - Adopted a Mitigated Negative Declaration, Use Permit and Reclamation plan for Vimark Pit on APN 066-290-049 (Board Resolution No. 97-0948, Permit Sonoma File No. PLP96-0096).
12/15/1998 - Adopted a Mitigated Negative Declaration, Use Permit and Reclamation plan to expand four the existing McLaughlin, Vimark, Piombo and Mariani Pits on APNs 066-300-049, 066-300-011, 066-290-048, 066-230-047, and 066-230-079 (Board Resolution No. 98-1573, Permit Sonoma File No. PLP96-0096).

FISCAL SUMMARY

None

Agenda Date: 4/22/2025

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

Not Applicable

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

Not Applicable

Attachments:

Attachment 1: PLP23-0014 Board of Supervisors Resolution

Attachment 2: PLP23-0014 Board Resolution Exhibit A - General Plan Land Use Map

Attachment 3: PLP23-0014 Board Resolution Exhibit B - Use Permit Conditions of Approval

Attachment 4: PLP23-0014 Board of Supervisors Ordinance Zoning

Attachment 5: PLP23-0014 Planning Commission Resolution No. 24-11

Attachment 6: PLP23-0014 Planning Commission Staff Report and Attachments

Attachment 7: PLP23-0014 Table of Project Parcels

Attachment 8: PLP23-0014 Project Description

Attachment 9: PLP23-0014 Design Plans

Attachment 10: PLP23-0014 Public Access Plans

Attachment 11: PLP23-0014 Basis of Design Report

Attachment 12: PLP23-0014 CDFW SERP Concurrence Letter - May 22, 2024

Attachment 13: PLP23-0014 Hanson Restoration Feasibility Study, 2015

Attachment 14: PLP23-0014 Public Comments Prior to April 8, 2025

Attachment 15: PLP23-0014 Staff Presentation

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

N/A