

April 18, 2026

Ms. Julia Krog, Director
Department of Planning and Building Services
860 North Bush Street
Ukiah, CA 95482

Re: Case # CDP 2025-0007

Dear Ms. Krog,

We regret that we are unable to attend the hearing on April 23 in person. Our son, a diplomat in the U.S. State Department, lives with his family in China, and we had made plans in January to depart on April 24 for our annual visit with him and his family, precluding our ability to attend the hearing in person. Our representative, David M. Kindopp, will represent us at the hearing.

We wish to bring to your attention the following issues of concern regarding Case CDP 2025-0007 in which the Applicant seeks a permit to build a 2,375 sq ft dwelling and an adjacent 368 sq ft cottage on their property at 980 N. Highway 1, Albion.

- 1) The case staff report indicated that approval was contingent on adequate driveway access, but CalTrans said the existing driveway entrance, which is on our property (1020 N. Highway 1), to Highway 1 did not meet current driveway standards. The major issue was inadequate visibility north of the driveway entrance to the highway. The CDP report states "Per Caltrans' 1/5/2026 letter, there is one way to improve the driveway conditions that remain under the applicant's direct control." That statement is not correct: the driveway entrance is on our property (APN 126-040-09), hence under our control.

Further, most of the trees for about 75 yards north of the driveway entrance to Highway 1 are on our property, not the Applicant's adjacent property (APN 126-040-11), which is further north. This error in the Staff Report CDP 2025-0007 should be corrected. Moreover, the Applicant does not have the right to remove trees on our property, and we do not grant the Applicant permission to remove the trees on our property.

Also, CDP 2025-007 states that five parcels are currently served by the private driveway on our property. That is not correct, because only four parcels are served by our driveway.

- 2) We also bring to your attention that we have had to drill a second well on our property because our original well ran dry due to the decreasing water table level. The well ran dry despite our infrequent (four per year) visits to our home, to which my wife and I intend to retire in the near future. Thus, the proposed new dwelling and cottage at 980 Highway 1 and the proposed additional well on the property will put further pressure on, and reduce the availability of, water from the Navarro Bluff's already fragile groundwater table for the existing residences. The aquifer, which

already supplies our home at 1020 N. Highway 1, the dwelling at 960 N. Highway 1 and the two dwellings on the Applicant's rental property at 970 N. Highway 1 (containing two water storage tanks to circumvent potential water shortage) would bring the number of dwellings supplied by the aquifer to six.

Further, we note that DEH's Coastal Groundwater Development Guidelines require that a 12-hour proof of water test be performed during the dry season (Aug 20 – Oct 31). Given the 48-hours of constant rain last week (April 10-12), this requirement is certainly appropriate and should be applied to the new well test on 980 Highway 1 property. The Department's Guidelines require that a water test be performed in the dry season to ensure the presence of adequate water for the proposed structures, and there is no reason for the Department to make an exception to its own Guidelines in this case.

- 3) Finally, and equally important, the natural beauty of the Mendocino Coast is the county's greatest asset. This asset – its natural beauty – will be diminished by the above proposed dwellings (plus a shed, propane tank and water tank) when viewed from the southside of the Navarro River Estuary.

For the above reasons, we respectfully believe that CDP 2025-0007 does not accurately identify the driveway entrance and water supply system issues described above, and we therefore request that the application be denied at this time.

Sincerely,



Phillip D. Smith and



Beverly A. VonDer Pool
1020 North Highway 1
Albion, CA 95410