BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT, STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Certified copy of portion of proceedings, Meeting of **October 6, 2026**

AN UNCODIFIED INTERIM URGENCY ORDINANCE OF THE COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT ESTABLISHING A TEMPORARY MORATORIUM ON THE ACCEPTANCE AND ISSUANCE OF PERMITS FOR THE REMOVAL OF LARGE REDWOOD TREES, WHICH SHALL TAKE IMMEDIATE EFFECT.

ORDINANCE NO. _____
NOW, THEREFORE, The Board of Supervisors of the County of Humboldt ordains as follows:
SECTION 1. Findings and Declarations.

A. Government Code Section 65858 allows a county, without following the procedures otherwise required prior to adoption of a zoning ordinance, to adopt, as an urgency measure, an interim ordinance prohibiting any uses which may be in conflict with a contemplated general plan, specific plan, or zoning proposal which the legislative body, planning commission or planning department is intending to study within a reasonable time.

B. The County of Humboldt ("County") regulates land uses in the unincorporated area of the County through various regulations including the General Plan, Local Coastal Plans, and the Zoning Ordinance, including land uses that are permitted by-right or through a discretionary review.

C. For the purposes of this ordinance, a "large redwood tree" is a coast redwood tree, which is also identified as a Sequoia sempervirens, which is forty (40) inches or greater in diameter at breast height.

D. The County is aware of concerns regarding adverse effects on the public welfare from the removal of redwood trees, including the effect on community character.

E. Redwood trees are an important characteristic of Humboldt County and contribute to the community's culture, sense of place, and tourism.

F. The Planning and Building Department has received a significant number of comments from the public expressing concern regarding significant environmental and cultural impacts from the loss of redwood trees.

G. The County intends to develop performance standards to allow the ability of landowners to remove redwood trees while preventing the unacceptable environmental and cultural impacts resulting from the unregulated removal of redwood trees exhibiting important community value.

H. The County has an interest in protecting the environment and the public health, safety and welfare of its residents by regulating removal of large redwood trees as a land use.

I. A temporary prohibition of new applications and issuance of permits for removal of larger redwood trees is needed while an ordinance regulating redwood tree removal in the County is being drafted.

J. There is a current and immediate threat to the public health, safety and welfare if permits for removal of large redwood trees are issued without the benefit of performance standards. Such permits or entitlements may result in the loss of county resources that conflict with the contemplated amendments to the County's land use regulations that are under review, and imposition of the moratorium will give the County time to introduce, review and adopt a revision of land use regulations in the Zoning Code.

K. In consideration of the concerns noted herein, it is in the interest of the public health, safety and welfare to adopt this urgency ordinance establishing a moratorium on acceptance of applications and issuance of permits for the removal of large redwood trees.

L. Notwithstanding the above, per state law, such a moratorium shall not apply to lands zoned Timberland Production Zone and shall not apply to tree removal on lands greater than three (3) acres being conducted under an approved Cal-Fire Timber Harvest Plan.

M. In addition, the moratorium shall not apply to lands greater than three (3) acres in area and zoned Agriculture Exclusive where timber production is a permitted use of the property when the tree harvesting is done under an approved Cal-Fire Timber Harvest Plan.

N. It is in the public interest that the moratorium does not apply to the removal of large redwood trees located within thirty (30) feet of an existing, legally constructed habitable building or within thirty (30) feet of the footprint of a proposed habitable building for which a building permit has been issued.

O. It is in the public interest that an exception to this moratorium exists for the removal of large redwood trees that are identified as an immediate hazard to life or property, as documented by a report from a Registered Professional Forester (RPF) or

Internationally Certified Arborist (ICA), subject to review and approval by the Planning Director.

P. California Government Code Section 65858 allows the County to adopt an interim ordinance that prohibits uses when those uses conflict with a pending land use study. Such a measure requires a 4/5ths vote of the Board of Supervisors; must contain a finding that there is a current and immediate threat to public health, safety and welfare; and may be adopted without following the notice and adoption procedures required for other zoning ordinances. The interim moratorium has an initial duration of forty-five (45) days and may be extended as specified by Government Code Section 65858.

Q. The Board of Supervisors finds this urgency ordinance is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to Title 14, California Code of Regulations Section 15308 because it is a regulatory action taken to protect the environment, and Section 15061(b)(3) because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment and therefore the activity is not subject to CEQA.

R. The Board of Supervisors considers it necessary to adopt this urgency interim ordinance to explicitly prohibit acceptance of applications and issuance of permits for the removal of large redwood trees while the updates to the Zoning Ordinance and other land use regulations are studied and developed.

S. The Board of Supervisors intends that this temporary prohibition and moratorium apply to all new applications received and to issuance of permits during the moratorium period.

SECTION 2. Declaration of Urgency.

A. Based on the findings set forth above, the Board finds and declares that there is a current and immediate threat to public health, safety and welfare due to the potential environmental and cultural impacts of removal of large redwood trees.

B. Based on the findings above, the Board of Supervisors determines that this interim urgency ordinance is urgently needed for the immediate preservation of the public health, safety and welfare pursuant to the Government Code Sections 25123(d), and 65858, and is necessary to prevent potentially significant impacts to the environment and surrounding communities relating to quality of life, tourism, visual resources, community character and habitat, while amendments to the existing Humboldt County

Zoning Code are developed and considered for adoption which balance the interests of businesses, residents and the public in protecting the environment and the communities in the unincorporated areas of Humboldt County.

SECTION 3. Moratorium.

In order to protect the public health, safety and welfare and pursuant to the provisions of Government Code Sections 25123(d) and 65858, during the term of this ordinance, including any extensions hereto, a moratorium is hereby placed on the acceptance of any application for, or issuance of any permit, that authorizes the removal of large redwood trees except those specifically exempted herein.

SECTION 4. Effective Date.

Pursuant to Government Code Section 25123, subdivision (d), this urgency ordinance shall become effective immediately upon adoption.

SECTION 5. Enforceability.

Violations of this ordinance shall constitute a public nuisance and may be enforced and abated through any available remedy provided by the Humboldt County Code or other law.

SECTION 6. Expiration.

This moratorium shall be of no further force or effect upon the expiration of forty-five (45) days from the date of adoption, unless extended in accordance with Government Code Section 65858.

SECTION 7. Severability.

If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or portion of this ordinance or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held to be invalid or unenforceable by a court of competent jurisdiction, such invalidity shall not affect the remaining portions or other applications of the ordinance, and the provisions of this ordinance are declared to be severable.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED this_____day of _____, 2026, on the following vote, to wit:

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

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AYES: Supervisors: --

NOES: Supervisors: --

ABSENT: Supervisors: --

_____

Mike Wilson, Chair
Board of Supervisors of the County of
Humboldt, State of California

(SEAL)

ATTEST:

Tracy Damico, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
of the County of Humboldt, State of California

By: _____

Kaleigh Maffei, Deputy Clerk