Public Comment on H.2

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SEP 28 2026
Clerk
Board of Supervisors

To: Humboldt County Board of Supervisors

From: Lisa Brown and Patrick Porto

Re: 3-acre Open Space and Structure Protection Exemptions

Example shown: Quail Valley Road Neighborhood

Humboldt County, California

Following a timber harvest exemption proposal for our subdivision, one very similar to Quail Valley (a residential subdivision with homes on lots ranging from 2.5 to 6.5 acres) our neighbors began a lengthy investigation into Humboldt County's use of CalFire's 3-Acre and Structure Protections Exemptions and their impacts on neighborhoods and the environment.

What we found at Quail Valley was a devastating example of the exemption process used improperly, turning what was once a gorgeous neighborhood into a denuded landscape.

As found in the chart and map below, the 3-acre Exemption and the Structure Protection Exemptions were combined to enable clearcutting of entire parcels, one right next to the other, resulting in essentially a 50-acre (46.2) clearcut, leaving all but a few scattered trees (California's Forest Practice Rules limits tractor yarded clearcuts to 20-acres).

EX Type	Exemption Number	Parcel Number	Exemption Acres	Total Parcel Acres	Timber Owner	Address	Bona Fide Intent
3A	1-22EX-00930-HUM	402-331-011	2.00		Paul Barker	150 Quail Valley Rd	Open Space
SP1	1-22EX-00929-HUM	402-331-011	1.50		Paul Baker	150 Quail Valley Rd	Protect Structure
SP1	1-21EX-00095-HUM	402-331-011	1.00		Amador Munoz	150 Quail Valley Rd	Protect Structure
SP2	1-21EX-00096-HUM	402-331-011	1.50	6.00	Amador Munoz	150 Quail Valley Rd	Protect Structure
3A	1-22EC-00292-HUM	402-331-013	2.80	2.80	Rails Family Trust	32 Quail Valley Rd	Open Space
3A	1-22EX-00594-HUM	402-331-014	2.90	2.90	Alyson Kubik	64 Quail Valley Rd	Open Space
SP1	1-22EX-00579-HUM	402-331-015	1.30		Dana Fahey	48 Quail Valley Rd	Protect Structure
SP2	1-22EX-00580-HUM	402-331-015	1.70	3.00	Dana Fahey	48 Quail Valley Rd	Protect Structure
SP1	1-22EX-00581-HUM	402-331-022	2.60		Tom Gill	161 Redmond Rd	Protect Structure
SP2	1-22EX-00583-HUM	402-331-022	1.70	4.30	Tom Gill	161 Redmond Rd	Protect Structure
3A	1-22EX-00668-HUM	402-331-024	2.30		Mike Kasper	80 Quail Valley Rd	Open Space
SP1	1-22EX-00667-HUM	402-331-024	2.20	4.50	Mike Kasper	80 Quail Valley Rd	Protect Structure
3A	1-22EX-00818-HUM	402-331-025	2.50		Michael Shirley	140 Quail Valley Rd	Open Space
SP1	1-22EX-00817-HUM	402-331-025	2.60	5.10	Michael Shirley	140 Quail Valley Rd	Protect Structure
3A	1-23EX-00399-HUM	402-331-026	2.90	2.90	Rachael Bury	217 Quail Valley Rd	Open Space
3A	1-22EX-01129-HUM	402-331-030	2.80	2.80	John Norton	260 Quail Valley Rd	Open Space
3A	1-22EX-01021-HUM	402-331-034	1.50		James Lachowski	460 Quail Valley Rd	Open Space
SP1	1-22EX-01016-HUM	402-331-034	1.70	3.20	James Lachowski	460 Quail Valley Rd	Protect Structure
SP1	1-22EX-01017-HUM	402-331-035	2.70		Chris Gaines	402 Quail Valley Rd	Protect Structure
SP2	1-22EX-01018-HUM	402-331-035	0.50	3.20	Chris Gaines	402 Quail Valley Rd	Protect Structure
3A	1-22EX-01131-HUM	402-331-036	0.50		Daniel Barker	308 Quail Valley Rd	Open Space
SP1	1-22EX-01130-HUM	402-331-036	2.20	2.70	Daniel Barker	308 Quail Valley Rd	Protect Structure
3A	1-22EX-01131-HUM	402-331-037	2.40		Daniel Barker	308 Quail Valley Rd	Open Space
SP1	1-22EX-01130-HUM	402-331-037	0.60	3.00	Daniel Barker	308 Quail Valley Rd	Protect Structure
---	None Listed	402-331-028	0.00	0.00	Unknown	253 Quail Valley Rd	Unknown
---	None Listed	402-331-029	0.00	0.00	Unknown	275 Quail Valley Rd	Unknown
	Exemption Acreage		46.40	46.40			

3A Less than 3 Acre Conversion Exemption
SP1 Structural Protection Exemption 0-150 Feet
SP2 Structural Protection Exemption 150-300 Feet

The parcel map shown below has been modified to highlight the parcels on Quail Valley that have permits approved by both CalFire and Humboldt County (listed in chart) in pink. Two parcels at the top with the cross hatching appear to be cut yet no permit has been found associated with these parcels. We are unclear of the status of these parcels.

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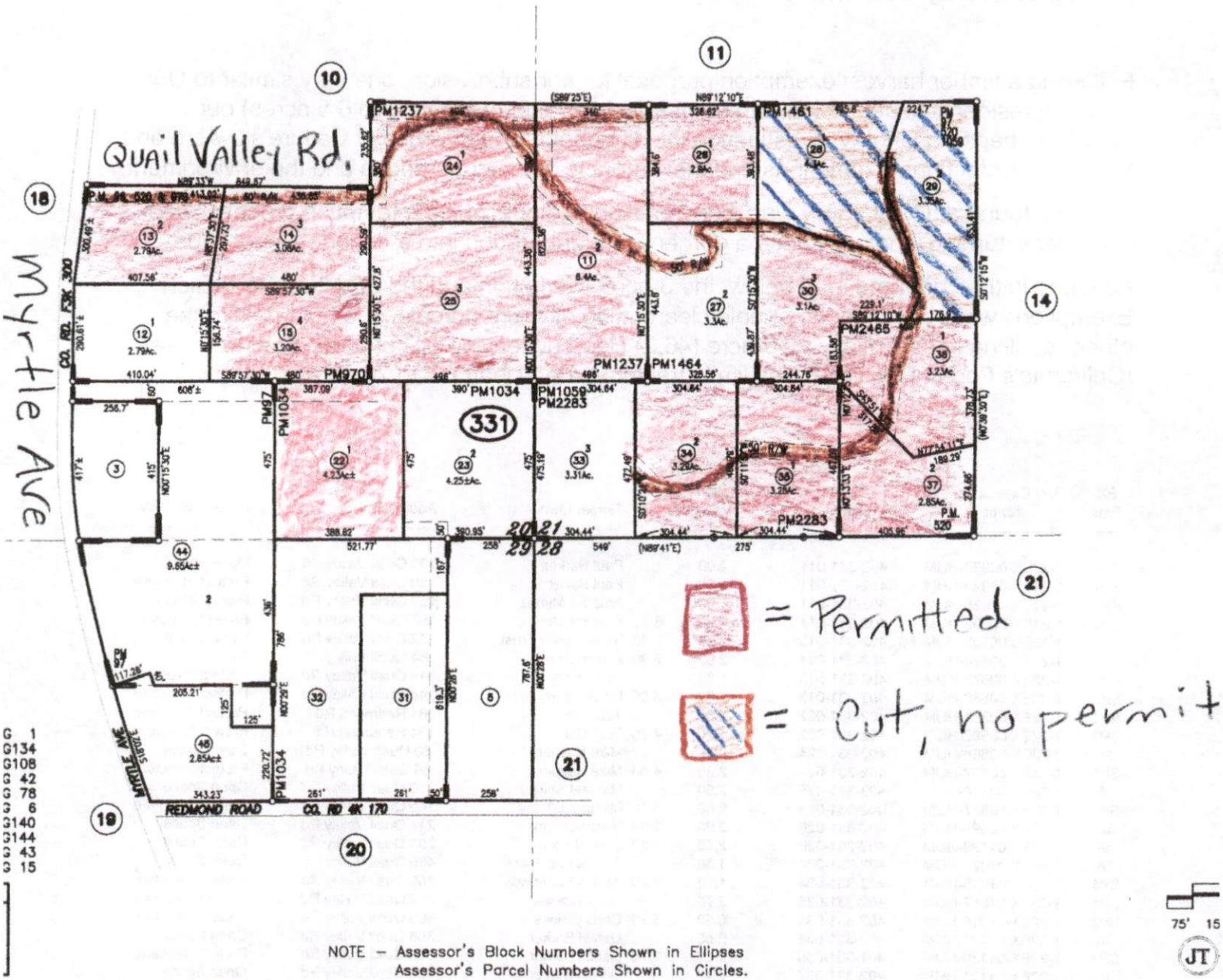

The pictures that follow were taken sequentially traveling from the bottom of Quail Valley Road at its intersection with Myrtle Ave up to the top of the hill. The last picture was taken at the juncture of the road at the top near the cross hatched parcels shown. It is a distance of .6 miles from the bottom to the top.

Please take a moment to fully take in the pictures below. For educational purposes, go to Google maps and put the yellow man at the base of Quail Valley Road and Myrtle Avenue in Eureka and travel up the road to see what once was and is now gone.

In our investigations we found that the CalFire exemption process bypasses comprehensive review of cumulative impacts and impacts to the environment and provides neighbors with no process to provide meaningful input or objections. While most all Registered Professional Forester's in Humboldt County use the exemption process for legitimate reasons, such as clearing for a homesite or taking trees out that are deemed a hazard to protect structures, we have identified some who use Open Space as the bonafide intent, or using the exemptions for parcels that have no residence or building permit, and/or using adjacent homes for Structure Protection Exemptions on vacant parcels, essentially creating a loophole for commercial logging.

Given the example of Quail Valley, which may be more common than we realize, prior to signing off on CalFire exemptions, we ask the County to determine the following:

1. The CalFire exemption is consistent with the intent of the Legislature and associated with a current residence or a proposed residence with an approved building permit.
2. The cumulative impacts within a watershed.
3. The identification and protection of large diameter trees.
4. The impacts to neighborhood character and safety.
5. The cumulative impacts of exemptions that are contiguous to other exemptions.
6. Impacts to roads, both County and private.

None of the above are adequately evaluated by CalFire and yet have enormous impacts to the County and it's residents.

Thank you for your attention.

Lisa Brown and Patrick Porto