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6-3-2009

Land Use Element of the Mendocino County General Plan

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2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Purpose of Findings

"The Board of Supervisors of the County of Mendocino hereby finds and declares that there exist in the County of Mendocino, areas of great importance for the study of the past of the native Indian of California, hereinafter referred to as 'Native American', and said areas hereinafter referred to as 'Native American archaeological sites', and that such sites are unique, irreplaceable phenomena of significance in the history of the County and in the understanding of the cultural heritage of our land and of all humankind; that the character of such sites has attracted and can attract visitors and scientific interest to the County, thereby augmenting the economy and general welfare of the County and its residents; that such sites constitute a precious archaeological, paleontological, and historical heritage which is fast disappearing as a result of public and private land development and other undertakings of land modification, and as a result of excessive and uncontrolled excavations for Native American artifacts; that the total efforts of government to preserve and salvage these sites and resources is fragmented and uncoordinated; that the preservation and enhancement of these sites is essential to the economic and cultural life of the County; and that, in order to promote the public welfare, it is necessary to provide regulations for the protection, enhancement, and perpetuation of such sites." (Ord. No. 1681, adopted 1976).

The above policy statement is Section 22.12.010 of the Mendocino County Code. It is the preamble to the "Native American Archaeological Sites" chapter of the code which sets up an Archaeological Commission for the County. The charge of this commission is to review "projects", as defined by CEQA, for archaeological impact, and to develop mitigation where impact exists. Through the archaeological chapter of the code,

Mendocino County has articulated policy and established an implementation strategy for archaeological resources.

Through the operation of the Commission, there has been a significant reduction of archaeological site disturbances. However, such incidents do still occur and means by which they may be prevented are desired. Additionally, the process for project review through the Commission is sometimes lengthy and duplicative of other County agency review. Means to make archaeological permit review speedier and more efficient is also desired. The Archaeological Commission is presently studying a grant application to examine ways in which more reliable and efficient archaeological decisions can be made. The following policies are offered as a reflection of archaeological direction derived from the county code.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES GOAL AND POLICIES

Goal. Provide for the protection, enhancement and perpetuation of significant Native American archaeological sites.

Policies

- I 1. Maintain Chapter 22.12 of the Mendocino County Code as an effective and desirable way in which archaeological resources are protected.
- I 2. Review on-going incidents of archaeological site disturbance and determine causes of same.
- I 3. Develop ways in which site disturbance can be eliminated, such as redefinition of Archaeological Commission jurisdiction to include non-CEQA projects, or other means.
- I 4. Develop a more reliable archaeological resources information base which can lead to reduction of paperwork and permit review.
- I 5. Research more efficient processes and inter-agency cooperation as ways in which to reduce delay and make better decisions.
- I 6. Develop grant proposals for Board of Supervisors review to accomplish above.

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3. HISTORICAL RESOURCES

Mendocino County has established a Historical Preservation District for the Town of Mendocino through Article 42 of the County Code. This is the only place where specific historical preservation implementation has been developed. There have been several problems identified in the operation of the Mendocino Historical Review Board, but since Mendocino is in the Coastal Zone, specific recommendations for planning policy in that area are left to the Local Coastal Plan process. In other historical resource protection areas, the Mendocino County Museum has been the central agency for review and recommendation. Historic sites in the County which are officially listed either on the National Register of Historic Sites or the California State Landmarks Register which are identified in Appendix 4.

HISTORICAL RESOURCES GOAL AND POLICIES

Goal. Provide for the protection and enhancement of the County's significant historical resources.

Policies

1. Designate the Mendocino County Museum as a Lead Agency for development of Historical policy as well as for technical advice on specific historical sites.
2. Coordinate historical policy with Mendocino County Historical Society and Archaeological Commission direction.

3. Investigate grants to encourage and promote historical resource conservation.
4. Research methods in which historical resources can be inventoried, and conserved by reducing land use conflict within the site region.
5. Significant historical sites shall be protected. Mendocino County shall encourage preservation of its rich architectural heritage by adoption of the State Historic Building Code and utilization of the Marks Historical Rehabilitation Act of 1976 (Section 37600, Health and Safety Code).
6. Inventory the significant historical resources of the County through volunteer assistance and the County museum.

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