NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

FILING REQUESTED BY AND WHEN FILED, RETURN TO:

Marin County Parks and Open Space District
3501 Civic Center Drive, Suite 260, San Rafael, CA 94903
www.marincountyparks.org
(415) 473-6387

To: Marin County Clerk
3501 Civic Center Drive, Suite 255
San Rafael, CA 94903

Date: October 11, 2022

Project Title: BALD HILL PROPERTY ACQUISITION

Project Location: Town of Ross, Marin County, California

Assessor's Parcel: 073-011-01 & 30

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of the Project: The Marin County Open Space District (MCOSD) is proposing to acquire the approximate 60 acre "Bald Hill" property from the Marin Open Space Trust. The property is located at the top of Upper Road West in the Town of Ross and shares a boundary with the Marin Municipal Water District (MMWD) watershed to the west. The purpose of the property acquisition is to provide a point of access to MMWD lands as well as the MCOSD's existing Bald Hill Open Space Preserve by way of existing trails.

The property has been a high priority for acquisition by the MCOSD and the broader community since 1976, when it was identified as a high conservation priority for its "invaluable open space" and scenic value in the San Anselmo General Plan. It was further identified in the Marin County-wide Plan under OS-2.2 which specifically cites the ridgeline of the Corte Madera Creek watershed as a potential greenbelt/community separator and a priority for acquisition. Since 1988, there have been several attempts by the MCOSD, Town of Ross, and the community to negotiate a purchase, the first occurring in 1988. On June 29, 1999, the County of Marin received a voluntary donation of fee title to portions of Upper Road West, with the intent of securing access to the Bald Hill property.

The "Bald Hill" property consists mostly of oak and bay woodland and contains approximately 0.75 of existing trail. After acquisition, the MCOSD would incorporate the property into its existing Bald Hill Open Space Preserve. A management plan has not been completed for Bald Hill property. Acquisition of the subject property would not commit the MCOSD to implementation any future project.

Public Agency Approving Project: Marin County Parks and Open Space District

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out the Project: Max Korten, Director

Reasons for Exemption: The Marin County Open Space District has reviewed the project along with its environmental setting and has determined it to be categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act under the following section of the California Administrative Code:

Section 15316: Transfer of Ownership of Land in Order to Create Parks. The proposed project consists of the acquisition of the approximate 60-acre "Bald Hill" property to establish a park where the land is in a natural condition and a management plan for the park has not been prepared. The proposed property acquisition would not result in environmental impacts on sensitive resources, cumulative impacts, significant impacts on the environment due to unusual circumstances, or affect the significance of historical resources. The "Bald Hill" property is not located within an officially designated scenic highway or on a hazardous waste site pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5.

Section 15004: Time of Preparation. This Notice of Exemption provides CEQA compliance for acquisition of the property only. The MCOSD requires additional time to conduct studies and complete a management plan for the Smith "Bald Hill" property. At such time that a proposed project for "Bald Hill" property is identified, the MCOSD Parks would prepare a separate compliance document pursuant to CEQA after sufficient meaningful information is available to conduct an assessment of environmental effects.

Lead Agency Contact Person:

Michelle Julene, Regulatory and Open Space Planner
Marin County Parks and Open Space District
Office Cell: 415 444 6740

POSTED: 10/11/22 TO: 11/11/22
Marin County Parks and Open Space District
NOTICE OF EXEMPTION – PROJECT LOCATION
Bald Hill Property Acquisition
October 11, 2022

Source: Marin County Open Space District