

CARMEL J. ANGELO
Chief Executive Officer
Clerk of the Board



COUNTY OF MENDOCINO
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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May 21, 2019

To: Mendocino County Planning & Building
California Department of Fish and Wildlife; and
North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

Re: Urgent Fire Safety Access Route, Agency Fast track

Dear Sir or Madam,

We write to you regarding Williams Ranch Road, a private rural road serving the greater Ridgewood Park Subdivision, southwest of Willits, CA. This is a critical access road in an Urban Interface zone, which is extremely vulnerable to wildfire. Historically, the road has served to connect two county roads and provide local access between Ridgewood Summit and Willits (see attached map). This provided residents and emergency service agencies dual routes from Highway 101 to any location within the subdivision.

The north end of Williams Ranch Road was closed in 2017 due to a landslide near its terminus with Muir Mill Road. The road closure cut off secondary access for the entire subdivision. Nearly all parcels south of Baechtel Creek now have only single access to Highway 101 at Ridgewood Summit, via Blackhawk Drive and Black Bart Drive. Residents along Baechtel Creek now have only single access to Highway 101 at Willits, via Muir Mill Road. As a safety access, this closure likely affects approximately 300 residents.

Williams Ranch Road is a private road and the easement holders of this community are ultimately responsible for its maintenance and repair. There are several challenges to raising the needed funds based on the way their subdivision was originally created. This has caused the unfortunate delay. With the increasing awareness of fire safety dedicated members of the community believe they can raise the funds necessary especially if the agencies can recognize this as an emergency repair. Keeping the project affordable is a necessary aspect of the repair.

We share this community's safety concerns and we recognize the importance of this road as a critical fire escape route and as an important route for ingress and egress of emergency service responders. In short, the continued closure of this road poses life-threatening risks.

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We stand with this community and urge the regulatory agencies to recognize the human safety aspect of this project and help expedite the reopening of Williams Ranch Road in any way possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Carre Brown", is centered within a light gray rectangular box.

Carre Brown, Chair,
Mendocino County Board of Supervisors