

Escape from wildfire has always been a concern but after the Camp Fire it has taken on a new sense of urgency. There is public road (called Cahto road among other names) leading East from Westport that serves as an evacuation route among other uses. During November of 2019 three deep trenches were dug across this road completely blocking any vehicular escape. During the course of litigation "Cahto Road" was shown to be an unmaintained county road but the court records (Case No. 60508) were purged even though the action affected an interest in real property and thus should have been retained permanently. The supporting documents still exist and while the expert witnesses interpreting them are no longer available any new expert would come to the same conclusion. It should be the county's position that the barricades are an unlawful interference with the public right-of-way and the county should request that the landowner (Rodger Burch, % Redwood Empire Sawmills, P.O. Box 156, Cloverdale, CA 95425) remove them.

I have some copies of the purged files and I will share them if the Board is interested.

There are no liability or maintenance issues for the county relating to the use for evacuation by the public on an unmaintained county road. The risk (and maintenance) is on the public (evacuee). Of course, there may be some liability for the entity placing barricades to prevent public use. Perhaps the county could spare a little of its precious resources to make a statement that might jawbone those corporate entities that seem intent on denying the public use into modifying their position.

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