# Staff Report

Meeting Date: February 7, 2023

To: Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors

From: Bernadette Cizin, Assistant Planner

Subject: Proposed Acord Williamson Act Rescission and Re-entry (APA-22-16) and CEQA Determination

## Background and Discussion

On August 30, 2022, the County received an application for a Williamson Act Contract amendment to bring approximately 511 acres owned by William and Kristine Accord, under one Williamson Act contract consisting solely of property under their ownership with the Agricultural Use of livestock grazing. The property is currently under a Williamson Act contract consisting of 4,290 acres, with five separate property owners and the Agricultural Use of Range Land (Exhibit A).

This project does not propose to remove or add property to the existing agricultural preserves. It would simply revise the existing contract to remove all property owned by the applicants and reissue them one Contract consisting of property solely under their ownership.

**Agricultural Preserve Administrator Review**

Staff prepared a detailed report for review and recommendation by the Agricultural Preserve Administrator. Based on the report, the Administrator found the applicants request is consistent with the County Rules for the Establishment and Administration of Agricultural Preserves and Williamson Act Contracts and recommends the Board rescind and reissue the contract as proposed (Exhibit D).

## Environmental Review

Staff is proposing that the proposed project be considered categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15317, *Open Space Easements or Contracts.* A Categorical Exemption implies that the project will not result in any significant adverse environmental effects. CEQA Guidelines Section 15317 specifically exempts the making and renewing of open space contracts under the Williamson Act, which is applicable to the subject action.

The Board of Supervisors must consider the proposed CEQA exemption together with any comments received during the public review process. Further, the exemption can only be approved if the Board finds, based on the whole record before it, that there is not substantial evidence that the project will have a significant effect on the environment. Accordingly, a finding to this effect has been incorporated into both draft resolutions prepared for the Board’s consideration.

## Comments

Notice of the project was published and posted as required prior to the Board of Supervisors meeting and no public comment was received as of the preparation of this staff report.

## Recommended Action

Should the Board of Supervisors concur with staff’s analysis, staff recommends that the Board of Supervisors find that the proposed modifications to the Williamson Act contract are exempt from CEQA and approve said modifications.

A draft motion to this effect is provided below.

## Recommended Motions

I move to take the following actions:

1. Determine the project exempt from CEQA in accordance with Section 15317, Open Space Easements or Contracts; and
2. Adopt the attached resolution approving the rescission and reentry of the applicable Williamson Act contract; and

Exhibits to the Staff Report

1. Map showing all property under Contract 73025
2. Draft Resolution Approving the Rescission of the subject property from the existing contract and Reentry into a new Williamson Act Contract
3. Draft Williamson Act Contract
4. Agricultural Preserve Administrator Staff Report with Recommendation