

MARIN EMERGENCY RADIO AUTHORITY

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 12, 2006

TO: MERA Board of Directors

FROM: Martin J. Nichols, Executive Officer

SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM E2: ADOPTION OF A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVING A REVISED PROJECT DESCRIPTION FOR THE REGIONAL EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM "BACKBONE" WITH FINDINGS PURSUANT TO THE APPLICABLE PROVISIONS OF THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT FOR THE STEWART POINT EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS FACILITY

Recommended Action: Adopt a resolution revising the MERA project description to include the Stewart Point Emergency Communications Facility in Bolinas, and remove the Bolinas Fire Station site.

Background:

Based on your Board's review of the MERA Project EIR and the enclosed addendum, you are requested to concur with its findings and if so, adopt the enclosed resolution and exhibits.

The environmental analysis for Stewart Point Emergency Communications Facility at the Martinelli property concludes that it will be possible for MERA to approve the proposed revision to the Project Description using the existing MERA EIR and an Addendum.

The environmental analysis determined that near view impact from the trail is a significant impact that cannot be mitigated to less-than-significant. Under CEQA Guidelines Sections 15162(a)(3)(A) and (B) a Supplemental or Subsequent EIR does not have to be prepared if the proposed change in the project does not result in any new or more severe visual impacts. The MERA EIR concluded that construction of the facilities at the Bolinas Fire Station would result in a significant visual impact that could not be mitigated to a less-than-significant level. Therefore, the visual significant impact at the Martinelli site is not a new significant impact and given the distance to the site and the fact that far less people will see the facilities at the Martinelli site the visual impact is less severe than the Fire Station Site.

Because your Board will be using the existing MERA EIR for the Martinelli property, staff has incorporated global impacts and mitigation measures from MERA's existing EIR, and the additional mitigation measures contained in the Addendum into the draft Approval Resolution.

The draft approval resolution for the change in the project description does the following: It deletes the Bolinas Fire Station Site from the MERA Project Description and adds the Martinelli Property to the Project Description and finds that the visual impact from the hiking trail cannot be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

The draft approval resolution includes three Exhibits. Exhibit 1 is "Findings Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act", Exhibit 2 is a "Statement of Overriding Considerations" for the significant visual impact from the hiking trail, and Exhibit 3 is the "Martinelli Property Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program" that details how all impacts will be mitigated and the responsible agency.