



COUNTY OF PLACER
Community Development Resource Agency

John Marin, Agency Director

PLANNING

Michael J. Johnson
Planning Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors

FROM: Michael J. Johnson, Director
Planning Department, Community Development Resource Agency

DATE: July 10, 2007

SUBJECT: Department of Conservation Farmland Conservancy Grant Submittal Authorization
Kaminsky and Hamilton, Natural Trading Company

ACTION REQUESTED: The Planning Department is seeking authorization from the Board to submit a Farmland Conservancy Grant Program application in the amount of \$300,000 to the California Department of Conservation to assist with the acquisition of a conservation easement on a 40-acre property owned by Bryan Kaminsky and Caren Hamilton of the Natural Trading Company.

BACKGROUND: The California Farmland Conservancy Program provides grants that support the efforts of nonprofit organizations, local governments, and Resource Conservation Districts to conserve agricultural land through the voluntary acquisition of agricultural conservation easements.

Bryan Kaminsky and Caren Hamilton, dba The Natural Trading Company, have purchased the 40-acre parcel at 5841 Fruitvale Road, west of Gold Hill Road, in the Newcastle area of Placer County. The property is zoned Farm with a minimum building site size of 10 acres (F-B-X-10). The owners are establishing an organic farm on the property and are interested in selling an agricultural conservation easement to the County or other entity in order to preserve the agricultural and open space characteristics of the property in perpetuity.

Placer County's interest in acquisition is being considered pursuant to the objectives of the Placer Legacy Open Space and Agricultural Conservation Program (Placer Legacy) and the goals and policies of the Placer County General Plan. The establishment of an agricultural conservation easement on the property will protect and expand a small yet increasingly important segment of the County's agricultural economy in a rapidly urbanizing area. It also meets Placer Legacy's goals of promoting sales of locally grown produce and helping to create additional markets for agriculture.

The easement would prevent any use or development of the property that would significantly damage or impair the property or its agricultural values, with the exception of the right to install row crops, construct greenhouse(s), and build one new single-family residence. Family-owned and operated, The Natural Trading Company currently operates an organic farm in Penryn.

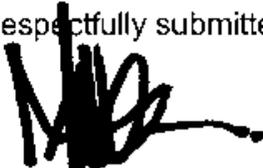
The parcel proposed for conservation is expected to continue to be used for, and is large enough to sustain, commercial agricultural production. The land is also in an area that possesses the necessary market, infrastructure (e.g., Nevada Irrigation District water), and agricultural support services. The surrounding parcel sizes and land uses is compatible with long-term commercial agricultural production.

The Planning Department has coordinated with the County Executive Office, Agricultural Commissioner and Facility Services/Property Management on this proposed application. An appraisal must be performed and submitted with the submission of the grant.

This action does not authorize the acquisition of the property. This action will allow the Planning Department to seek funding from the State of California. If successful with the all or a portion of the grant request, the Planning Department will return to the Board of Supervisors for additional direction.

FISCAL IMPACT: There is a five percent match requirement. Based upon preliminary discussions with staff from the Department of Conservation, the County's application will request \$300,000 in grant funds, or fifty percent of the estimated acquisition cost. Funds that have already been allocated by the Board in the Open Space Trust Fund could be utilized as a match. Total conservation easement acquisition costs have been estimated at \$600,000. The County will pursue financial contributions from land trusts, other non-profit organizations to reduce the cost to the County. Other County costs could include appraisal and escrow fees and staff time to prepare a grant application and proceed with an acquisition if deemed appropriate.

Respectfully submitted,



MICHAEL J. JOHNSON, AICP
Director of Planning

Exhibit Authorizing Resolution
Department of Conservation Correspondence

cc: Natural Trading Company
Christine Turner, Agricultural Commissioner

ref. t:\christopher\bosmemo\DOC\GrantAuthorization

**Before the Board of Supervisors
County of Placer, State of California**

In the matter of:

Resol. No: _____

**APPROVING THE APPLICATION FOR GRANT FUNDS FOR
THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION'S
FARMLAND CONSERVANCY PROGRAM
NATURAL TRADING COMPANY CONSERVATION EASEMENT**

The following RESOLUTION was duly passed by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Placer at a regular meeting held _____, by the following vote on roll call:

Ayes:

Noes:

Absent:

Signed and approved by me after its passage.

**Bruce Kranz
Chairman, Board of Supervisors**

**Attest:
Clerk of said Board**

Ann Holman

WHEREAS, the Legislature has established the California Farmland Conservancy Program within the Department of Conservation, and through a grant program is providing assistance to conserve important agricultural land resources that are subject to conversion pressures; and

WHEREAS, Placer County, or other entity, intends to establish an agricultural conservation easement on the Natural Trading Company property, a 40-acre parcel located at 5841 Fruitvale Road, west of Gold Hill Road, in the Newcastle area of Placer County, APN: 031-340-005-000. This easement acquisition is being considered pursuant to the objectives of the Placer Legacy Open Space and Agricultural Conservation Program (Placer Legacy) and for the purpose of conserving priority agricultural land resources; and

WHEREAS, the Placer County Board of Supervisors approves the easement proposal and certifies that the easement proposal meets the eligibility criteria set forth in Public Resources Code Section 10251, to wit:

(a) The parcel proposed for conservation is expected to continue to be used for, and is large enough to sustain, commercial agricultural production. The land is also in an area that possesses the necessary market, infrastructure, and agricultural support services, and the surrounding parcel sizes and land uses will support long-term commercial agricultural production.

(b) Placer County has a general plan which demonstrates a long-term commitment to agricultural land conservation. This commitment is reflected in the goals, objectives, policies, and implementation measures of the plan, as they relate to the Newcastle area of Placer County where the easement acquisition is proposed.

(c) Without conservation, the land proposed for protection is likely to be converted to nonagricultural use in the foreseeable future.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Placer County Board of Supervisors:

1. Approves the filing of an application for funding from the California Farmland Conservancy Program.
2. Appoints the Planning Director, or designee, as agent to execute and submit the grant application for the Natural Trading Company conservation easement.



DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

LAND RESOURCE PROTECTION

801 K STREET • MS 18-01 • SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95814

PHONE 916/324-0850 • FAX 916/327-3430 • TDD 916/324-2555 • WEBSITE conservation.ca.gov

June 19, 2007

Bryan Kaminsky
The Natural Trading Company
P.O. Box 19
Penryn, California 95663

Dear Bryan Kaminsky:

Thank you for taking the time to give us a tour of your farming operations at The Natural Trading Company. Your commitment to providing high quality organic produce and preserving agriculture in Placer County was very evident. We look forward to reviewing an application for a conservation easement on the Fruitvale property in the near future.

Sincerely,

Lanelle Burkham-Greydanus
California Farmland Conservancy Program
CA Department of Conservation

The Department of Conservation's mission is to protect Californians and their environment by:

Protecting lives and property from earthquakes and landslides; Ensuring safe mining and oil and gas drilling;

Conserving California's farmland; and Saving energy and resources through recycling.

