



GREAT REDWOOD TRAIL AGENCY

MEETING DATE: May 15, 2025

AGENDA ITEM: 10. Non-Exclusive Property Management License Agreement with Blue Lake Rancheria

FROM: Bridget Nichols

RE: Non-Exclusive Property Management License Agreement with Blue Lake Rancheria

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Blue Lake Rancheria seeks a license agreement with the Great Redwood Trail Agency to maintain and manage GRTA parcels that span approximately 0.3 miles of right-of-way along the A&M Rail Corridor beginning in the east at Chartin Road and terminating in the northwest at or near the Hwy 299 crossing near Blue Lake Rancheria and Blue Lake, CA. This item seeks a delegation of authority to the Executive Director to enter into a license agreement with the Blue Lake Rancheria to allow for management and maintenance of the described area for a two-year period.

BACKGROUND:

Blue Lake Rancheria (BLR) borders the GRTA right-of-way from Chartin Road west to the rail undercrossing of Highway 299 along the former Arcata & Mad River Rail Corridor. BLR actively restores and manages their adjacent property for invasive species removal, native species rehabilitation and protection, waterway and flood mitigation and would like to expand their efforts to the GRTA property.

The Blue Lake Rancheria is seeking to enter into a license agreement with the GRTA to allow for management and maintenance of GRTA parcels that span approximately 0.3 miles of right-of-way. This would include vegetation management along the old railway to remove invasive species and do native species rehabilitation and protection, pruning of existing plants to open the railway corridor, waste removal, waterway protection, flood mitigation, and surveys and studies to support planning for the Baduwa't Spur trail. Any land alterations or improvements would need to be reviewed and approved by the GRTA prior to any work being done.

The vegetation management workforce will be comprised of Blue Lake Rancheria staff and volunteers with hand-held tools. Various departments of the Blue Lake Rancheria may be involved including, but not limited to the Environmental Programs, landscaping, maintenance, and security. The invasive and native plant remediation projects will be handled by Environmental Programs and possibly students pursuing their undergraduate degrees in the biology field. Waste removal will likely be from Blue Lake Rancheria workforce primarily, though community volunteer days will likely be planned as well. Although no such activities are planned at the present time, if waterway protection or flood mitigation activities are determined by the licensee to be warranted, such would require pre-approval by GRTA.

No public access to the property, outside of public events and volunteer workdays organized by Blue Lake

Rancheria, is being authorized under the current proposed license agreement, which will be subject to negotiation and approval. Staff recommends the Board authorize the Executive Director to enter into such a license agreement for a two-year period with an option for renewal, in a form approved by counsel.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Blue Lake Rancheria is requesting GRTA enter into a license agreement to allow for the management and maintenance of the parcels in exchange for which the Blue Lake Rancheria will provide beneficial land stewardship through vegetation management, ongoing maintenance, and use consistent with the goals of the GRTA.

CEQA ANALYSIS:

The currently outlined activities for the license agreement are categorically exempt from CEQA under Title 14, Section 15304: Class 4 as the work consists of minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry and agricultural purposes. Such activities are further categorically exempt from CEQA under Title 14, Section 15333 as a minor habitat restoration project of less than five acres for plant and animal species, where no significant adverse impact on endangered, rare or threatened species or their habitat.

Any future improvements or land alteration, such as benches, stormwater management, floodwater mitigation measures etc., would be submitted for review and approval by the GRTA prior to being done, and are not reviewed under CEQA at this time. Should approval for additional activities later be sought, additional CEQA analysis for any proposed activities would be done by the GRTA.

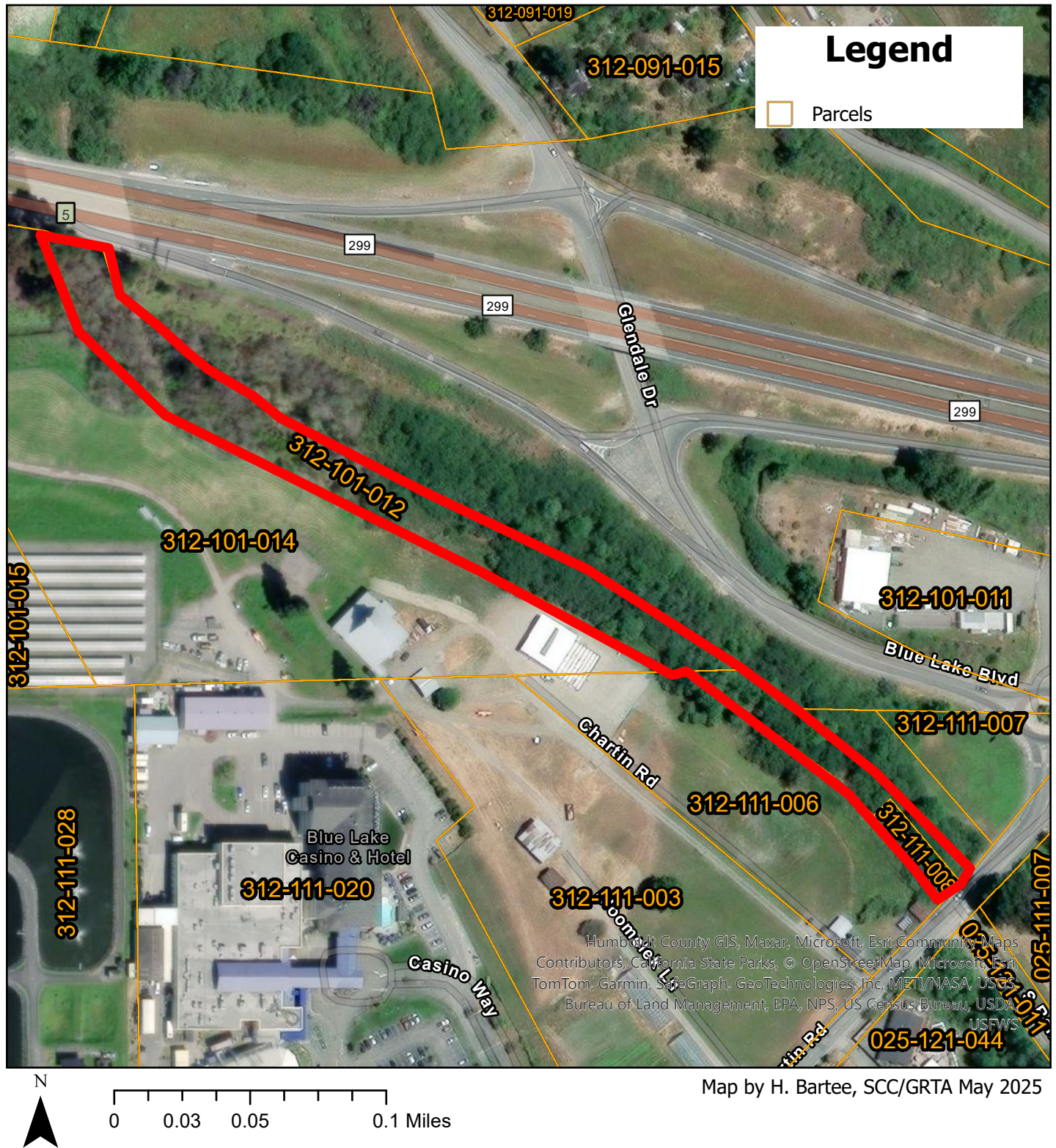
RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Board authorize the Executive Director to enter into a License Agreement with the Blue Lake Rancheria for the management and maintenance of GRTA property from the Chartin Road west to the Highway 299 crossing in Blue Lake, CA for a period of two (2) years, in a form approved by counsel.

ATTACHMENTS:

A. EXHIBIT A -BLR LICENSE PROPERTY MAY2025

Exhibit A - License Property



License property area outlined in red and includes land in three (3) parcels in Humboldt County: APN 312-101-012, APN 312-111-008, and APN unknown.