

DATE: June 2, 2006

TO: Historic District Commission

FROM: Community Development Department

SUBJECT: **The nomination of a 30-acre Eucalyptus and Olive Grove at 13417 Folsom Blvd. to the Cultural Resource Inventory List**

BACKGROUND

On November 5, 1998, the Folsom City Council approved the 'Historic Preservation Master Plan.' This document established goals and objectives for historic preservation within the City of Folsom, identified a process for the listing of locally-significant historic sites and structures, and authorized the Historic District Commission to determine the eligibility of sites nominated for listing. The Master Plan also specifies that properties that have been determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources are automatically eligible for local listing.

NOMINATION

The Community Development Department has received a request for the listing of the eucalyptus and olive grove at 13417 Folsom Boulevard as a locally-significant historical site. The submitted registration form was prepared by the Heritage Preservation League of Folsom. Based on the previous listing of this property in the 'Historic Preservation Master Plan,' staff has determined that the revegetation site is automatically eligible for listing and a decision by the Historic District Commission will not be required.

CRITERIA FOR LISTING

The Historic Preservation Master Plan includes the following criteria for the listing of a resource in the City's Cultural Resources Inventory:

- 1) Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- 2) Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- 3) Property embodies distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or construction method, or represent the work of a creative individual; or
- 4) Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in Folsom's prehistory or history.

In addition to being eligible for listing, the eucalyptus and olive grove at Folsom Boulevard meets all the criteria for listing as established by the Historic Preservation Master Plan. In response to public concerns regarding the impacts of dredging, the Natoma Company made plans in 1908 to restore land that had been dredged to extract gold. At that time, the State of California promoted eucalyptus trees as a good source of wood. By 1912, Natoma Consolidated had leveled and planted eucalyptus and olive trees on 30-acres of mine tailings close to the company headquarters at Natoma. The restored land was sold to the County of Sacramento in the early 1950's and later became a part of a continuous, State-owned green belt along the American River.

DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY

The eucalyptus and olive grove at Folsom Boulevard represents the first systematic attempt to restore dredged areas and to demonstrate that the reuse of mined areas was indeed possible. Similar reforestation

projects were conducted in Fair Oaks. The technique of planting directly in the leveled cobbles was soon abandoned and later rehabilitation efforts included the removal of cobbles before the sandy soils below were leveled and prepared for planting. The cobbles were later crushed and used for road base. As a result, a new industry had been created around the reuse of cobbles and the growing demand for new roadways.

Since the early Gold Rush, the Natoma Company controlled much of the land around Folsom in addition to the water rights. The mining and water delivery activities of the company shaped the landscape around the original town of Folsom and also created many of the employment opportunities that induced the early growth of the area.

LISTING

Based on the previous historic listing of the eucalyptus and olive grove at Folsom Boulevard, staff has included the property with the list of cultural resources eligible for the Cultural Resource Inventory list. Because the property owner (the California Department of Parks and Recreation) has no objections to the actual listing, staff will include the property with the Cultural Resource Inventory. Information regarding the Eucalyptus and Olive Grove will be available to the public at the Planning counter.

PROPERTY OWNER

Jim Michaels, with the Gold Field District of the California Department of Parks and Recreation, has expressed an interest in having an interpretive sign installed at the Parkshore Drive trailhead or parking area (see Attachment 3).

ATTACHMENTS

1. Vicinity Map and Narrative Description
2. The Nomination Package
3. Letters from the State Department of Parks and Recreation and the Bureau of Reclamation

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION ACTION

No action is required by the Historic District Commission.

**City of Folsom
Historic Preservation**

**CITY REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

This property, once hills of cobble and sand, was owned by the Natomas Company. Near their headquarters at Natoma, the Company prepared 30 acres of dredge tailing and planted eucalyptus and olive trees in the early 1900s. By the 1950s, the company sold their reclaimed land to the County and State. Such acreage became part of the green belt along the river. Presently, this grove of trees stands thick, tall and green showing no resemblance of its former self.

