

**Lower Russian River Mac**

**Minutes**

**June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

**5:30-7:30pm**

**Call to order** Mac Clerk/Nance Jones

**Pledge of allegiance** Group

**Roll call**

**Present:** Pip Marquez de la Plata, Vesta Copestakes, Jeanette Dillman, Mike Nicholls, Nic Pereira, Naomi Hufstutter, Kyra Wink, Lisa Nahmanson

**Absent:** Alice Teeter.

**A. Approval of Agenda**

Mike Nicholls made a motion to approve the agenda as it is. Vest Copestakes seconded the motion. The motion was approved 8-0-0

**B. Conflict of Interest-** none

**C. Correspondence-**Letter from Lloyd Guccione

**D. Consent Calendar-**

**a. Approval of April 15<sup>th</sup> minutes**

Several corrections were made to the minutes. Lois Lebovich submitted to the clerk corrections pertaining to the proposed park in Dubrava. It is Guernewood not Guernewood Park. So, noted. Lt. Michael Raasch name was spelled incorrectly and his tittle needs to be used in each noting of his name. So, noted

Tony Godwin has a correction to a comment he made on page 3. He will forward to the clerk for insertion into the minutes. Page 4 a correction to a vote on a motion made by Lisa Nahmanson. The correct vote was 8-1-0.

At this time Mike Nicholls asked for approval of the minutes to be held until all corrections are noted. The minutes will be approved at the next meeting.

## b. Approval of Land Use Policy

Pip Marquez de la Plata reviewed the highlights of the new Land Use Policy enclosed in the packet. It would meet every other month, have two permanent members and two who would be appointed based on the land use being reviewed.

### **Board Comment**

Mike Nicholls- the temporary members would be chosen based on location of the land use being reviewed.

Jeanette Dillman- Had a question about the membership. She recommends the addition of a third member as a permanent member which gives the group an odd number. She suggests this would make this a more solid group. Then one person would be appointed each meeting based on location of land use review.

Lisa Nahmanson- Likes the hybrid model and see this as a win-win.

Mike Nicholls- can we explore modifying from 2-3? The standing committee then would decide who the one person appointed would be for each meeting based on the agenda.

Lisa Nahmanson- Likes this suggestion.

Kyra Wink- Supports Jeanettes suggestion.

Jeanette Dillman- asked if the three AdHoc committees would be dissolved.

### **Public Comment**

Lloyd Guccione- You are going about this the wrong way. It should be the entire board not a select group. Decisions affect all areas as one flows into another. Also, what about public access to meetings.

Elise Weiland responded that the standing committee does not make decisions. They will sort through the proposals and identify which are appropriate to review. They will then decide what goes to the full MAC for review. All meetings will be open to the public and the minutes will be public.

Chair Pip Marquez de la Plata responded that the group will know their area issues and take back to the MAC

Mike Nicholls made a motion to approve the new Land Use Policy but amend the two-person permanent members to three and dissolve the three AdHocs.

Nic Periera seconded the motion and the motion passed. 8-0-0.

## **E. Public Comment**

Maeve Katherine Bergman- requests that everyone reviews the Silver Estates Loggin Plan. The plan has been resubmitted multiple times and still does not address safety of the area. They plan to log all of the fire-resistant trees and leave tan oaks and fire prone species which burn easily. The hillside will slide in the rain and there is no repair of a failed culvert on Neeley Rd.

There is great concern for the families that live on Neeley and asks that this group and members of Guerneville continue to stay abreast of decisions made regarding the logging plan.

Lloyd Guccione- Public Comment in other community or government meetings allow at least three minutes or no time limit at all. Please consider changing the comment to at least three minutes. He also agrees it is very import to support Maeve Bergman's comments regarding the logging plan. The clock is still very annoying. Jason commented he is working to make smaller.

Rick Coates-Executive Director of Forrest Unlimited. He supports Maeves comments. They are leaving fire prone species and will affect the stability of the slopes. He hopes this body can take up this issue.

Vera Fauss- Celebration of Fife Creek June 27<sup>th</sup> 12-5. Hopes everyone from the MAC attends. They will have fun stuff for kids. They will have information on the logging plan and other information regarding the work on Fife Creek.

## **F. Regular Calendar Items**

### **a. Supervisor Lynda Hopkins update**

- Sonoma County will meet the new state requirements for Covid. There will be no mask requirements for individuals or employees. All services will be open fully.
- Lynda provided information on the Budget process and outlined some close to final numbers. All pending final vote. They are:

350k for Septic Study which will look at community septic and sewers

Chamber and visitor center funding for one year

1.5 million for fire consolidation

2.5 million for Eucalyptus removal in public areas

Investment in Roads- 23 million for the West County- Streets in Guerneville will be paved

Cazadero Highway's final section of FDR and slipout repair should be complete by October 12, 2021

Emergency vehicle access roads are under review for opening during emergencies- Willow Creek and Old Cazadero Rd.

Fire mitigation funds are in the process of being distributed- 4 million ASAP

Several road widening projects are conditionally approved but need CEQA Approval and then can be funded

Project on Sweetwater approved

Homeless encampments- currently looking for options as encampments cannot be cleared

### **Board Comment**

Kyra Wink- Reported that the Residential Parking Study would not move forward as there were only two areas which wanted parking permits. Asked Lynda if there are possibilities for more parking enforcement in the future.

Lynda responded that there will be more enforcement but currently looking at where they would be housed. Not committed at this time but the county contingency was increased to 10 million and she is hoping to fund from there.

Mike Nicholls- Thanks to Supervisor Hopkins and Former Supervisor Carrillo for foresight and support of the \$315,000 awarded to support and fund the Access Sonoma Broadband study project.

Lucy Hardcastle- On behalf of her neighborhood fire group even though not funded she has seen her neighborhood really pull together and thanks Lynda for her support.

Vesta Copestakes- Asked about the timeline for Moscow Road and the removal of all the homeless trailers there now.

Lynda said they are still working diligently with FEMA. Permitting there has been an ecological challenge but the work continues.

Elise responded that there is ongoing work currently to remove the trailers and relocate.

### **Public Comment**

Rick Coates- Thank you Lynda for getting Cazadero Highway fixed.

Ian Eddie- Can you talk to water emergency as Healdsburg goes dry.

Lynda responded that they are looking at what contingencies will be needed for the lower river. At this time though there are no new additional contingencies being put in place for the lower river.

Vera Fauss- Four acres in Cloverdale and one acre in Monte Rio.

Kerry Sorenson- 2 fires on same side of hill is frightening. The homeless will burn us out if not fixed. Fix before we lose our homes.

Lynda agrees with Kerry and she is pushing for a place for the homeless to go and not in the bushes. District four also had a fire allegedly started by the homeless. She will keep working on.

b. Land Use

1. Pip Marquez de la Plata appointed the three members of the new standing Land Use Committee. They are:

Kyra Wink- Chairperson

Mike Nicholls- member

Nic Periera- Member

2. Presentation and comment. The Lok Group / Guerneville Development/Noble House

Presenters: Kirk Lok, Efren Carrillo, Jean Kopolchok, Penn Collins, Doug Demers

Efren Carrillo opened up the presentation along with Kirk and stated that this project has been in the making for 22 years. The group presented the architectural renderings and the vision for what the property will look like.

The actual presentation will be attached and available with the minutes.

**Board Comment**

Nic Periera- Garbage services near Dubrava should be moved as they will be very noisy.

Traffic Pattern study does not include River Road

Pi Marquez de la Plata-Summer traffic is very dense. During times of evacuation the traffic can even be denser. How will the project affect and can we mitigate?

Naomi Huffstutter-Commented that she has lived here for 50 years. She supports this new development but suggested maybe it could be smaller.

Mike Nicholls- Reported that the county has changed the size of the evacuation zones to alleviate some traffic issues during evacuation.

Lucy Hardcastle- Sees this as a good thing.

Lisa Nahmanson- Asked if the group could talk about the infrastructure and emergency planning.

Doug Demers responded that the infrastructure and water movement will meet all regulatory and market requirements. Things like charging stations, WIFI, emergency generators will be in place. This development may be used as an emergency center during emergencies.

Mike Nicholls- Solar may be feasible but Sonoma Clean Power's Evergreen option can be used in lieu if shade precludes solar.

Jeanette Dillman- This is not a new use of this property. Traffic problems are not with overnight stays. She really supports this project.

**Public Comment-**

Rick Coates- President of Eco Ring and he encourages everyone to support the project. His one question is how will this project integrate with the planned bicycle trail. He also asked if they are planning on incorporating rainwater catchment into the project. He thought the parking seemed excessive and would there be shuttles to and from the airport.

Penn Collins responded at this point they do not see the need for shuttles but there will be bicycles available and a bus stop out front.

Kirk Lok respond that he thinks the overnight guests may reduce traffic as they are not day trippers. He offered that maybe the county should charge for day use on the roads.

Wendy Bignall- Asked if the sewer would handle this.

Doug Demers answered that the River Sanitation has confirmed they can.

Cynthia Strecker- Asked if the development will enter into a community benefit agreement and will they also enter into a successor agreement. As to TOT most of it is from the river area anyway. Traffic is a concern.

Herman Hernandez- Reviewed historical perspective with the following facts.

In 1947 many people stayed at Johnsons Beach. The river was packed. Monte Rio and Rio Nido were booming.

1971- There were 33 hotels and campgrounds in the Russian River

2021- Now there are only 11

1964 – the flood washed many of them down the river and the numbers were reduced

1974- Many were converted to permanent housing that we all live in now

Traffic increased due to permanent housing. Herman supports this project

Adam B- Thanks the MAC for these meetings. Lives in GuerneWood Park and the homeless are taking over. Can't even walk dogs there now. He supports this project.

Mav- Recently moved here and supports this project and sees it as an enhancement to the area

Lloyd Guccione- Nice presentation. It has been presented before at special meetings where the majority did not approve. The benefits are overstated. Lloyd is opposed to the project and it should only be public access to the river which now there is very few. The venue for this presentation is not appropriate and there is not enough capacity to dispose of waste.

Patrick Novok- Supports the project and wants it to happen. We need to grow.

### C. Vacation Rental AdHoc Report See snapshots in Appendix A

The group wanted to learn how vacation rentals function in our neighborhoods.

Nic Periera- We need a robust mechanism to address violations in a transparent fashion. The perception in the community is that there \*is no\* enforcement and for the residents of the Lower River, perception is reality. We can't find a single instance of a permit being revoked for violations of the VR ordinance and without any sort of weekend enforcement, the county can be reasonably questioned about its sincerity regarding such enforcement. Permit Sonoma is critically under resourced when it comes to enforcement and we see this in other areas as well, the ongoing situation with Winery Events for example. The County doesn't even have an accurate count of permitted rental, no central database of these properties and no way to contact the owners or agents in case of emergencies or evacuations."

Lucy Hardcastle- Reminded the group that the work completed last year was just a snapshot in time and understands we need more information. The group is trying to keep a balance.

Vesta Copestakes- Also reiterated that this group is seeking balance. There are not enough families here. Vesta showed the spread sheet of data from PMRD and the website to educated the group as to how they are reaching out to collect data. Both will be available to review with the minutes. Her report is as follows:

Last year the Board of Supervisors put a freeze on the number of Short-term Vacation Rentals Sonoma County permits until the Vacation Rental ordinance can be reviewed for updates. This is NOT a moratorium on new VRs.

We formed this committee to learn more about how this industry impacts the Lower River communities. Traditionally a vacation destination, many of the homes in our area were once second homes for families living in San Francisco and Sacramento. Now these river cabins are full-time residences. Our area is uniquely suited for vacationers, unlike other communities in Sonoma County. That puts a lot of pressure on us to manage this commercial venture in a way the feels balanced and fair to both businesses and residents.

This seemed like a good opportunity to find answers to questions many of us have:

- Is there a maximum percentage of VR homes in a "neighborhood"

- that neighbor can still feel they are in a residential community as opposed to a commercial district?
  - Do VRs impact school enrollment and therefore school budgets and curriculum?
  - Do VRs increase the value/worth of homes in a neighborhood?
- Do VRs increase the PRICE of homes therefore making it hard for families to live here?

What started as general research quickly morphed in very specific data-mining as people asked us to learn more details on each VR. It's easy to get overwhelmed in the details but some important topics rose to the surface that specifically have the potential to be addressed in the VR ordinance when it is reviewed and updated:

#### **PARKING**

- - many of our neighborhoods are narrow streets that often wind up into the forested hills. Parking is a challenge even for homeowners so what happens when insufficient parking is provided for VR guests? Turns out there is a requirement for on-site parking spaces
- but not all VRs comply. 5. Parking. Parking shall be provided as follows: a minimum of one (1) on-site parking space for a vacation rental with up to two (2) guestrooms or sleeping rooms; two (2) on-site parking spaces for a three (3) or four (4) guestrooms
- vacation rental. Larger vacation rentals must demonstrate adequate parking with a minimum of three (3) spaces. On-street parking may be considered for up to one (1) of the required parking spaces; otherwise, the number of vehicles allowed for overnight guests
- shall be limited to the off-street parking available, as demonstrated by the application materials and the property checklist, but shall not exceed one vehicle per bedroom. This maximum number of vehicles permitted for guests shall be clearly set forth in all
- rental agreements and in all online advertisements and listings.

#### **NOISE**

- - people keep saying there is no noise ordinance in unincorporated SoCo but it turns out the VR ordinance addresses this issue: 1. Noise Limits. All activities associated with the vacation rental shall meet the general plan noise standards contained below.
- Quiet hours shall be from 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. The property owner shall ensure that the quiet hours and limits on outdoor activities are included in rental agreements and in all online advertisements and listings.



### COMPLAINTS

- - Our survey showed that people tend to call the Sheriff. These issues, like noise, parking, lights left on all night, barking dogs, are not crimes so law enforcement is NOT the entity to deal with these problems. Turns out the VR ordinance covers this topic
- - BUT - there is no EASY way to contact an owner or property manager. The only public source for a 24/7 phone number is deep in the permit Sonoma website! **SEE VR ORDINANCE 8. Certified 24-hour Property Manager.** This would seem to imply that a LOCAL property manager/owner is
- necessary AND that a POSTED 24/7 contact number on the property/fence/front door - easily seen would make it MUCH easier for people to call the correct person to fix the problem.

### EMERGENCIES

- - this 24/7 contact info also applies to emergencies such as fires, earthquakes, etc. Neighbors have been known to bang on the door of a VR to alert guests that they need to evacuate because those guests are not signed up for local Nixle alerts, etc. Having
- an easily found 24/7 contact number would save time, and perhaps lives.

### NEIGHBORHOOD INPUT

- - Our website provides an anonymous form for neighbors to help us identify VRs where they live. Using the mapping tool, we have on our website; we can SEE density per neighborhood/street. This is NOT a tool Permit Sonoma currently has, and as you can see, they
- use mailing addresses which are very different from street addresses so the neighborhood-by-neighborhood information should help them determine questions about density per neighborhood.

### We VERIFY the data

- in the same way Permit Sonoma verifies their data, but we are asking for many more details. What PS needs is different from what we want to know in order to answer community concerns. (*Demonstrate process using screenshots*)
- **So far, our most important suggestions**
- for the revised ordinance have to do with the **easy access to 24/7 contact information posted** where neighbors can quickly call the property manager/owner - and **parking**.
- On our tiny streets wandering up hills and down canyons, fire truck and emergency service access is essential.

## **Board Comment**

Mike Nicholls- Did you reach out to rental agencies?

Nic Periera responded that they refused to work with the group.

Mike Nicholls then asked if they had reached out to the tax collector as they may have a lot of information the ad hoc is seeking.

Vest Copestakes responded not at this time.

Jeanette Dillman- Has heard from many of her constituents that the questions are too personal and not needed. She also suggested that the website needs more professional study. That the data needs to be dependable. Could the group look at a more formal way to complete the study.

Naomi Huffstutter- Honestly feel that the county is pushing their job on us. They should be able to figure it out and this makes no sense to me.

## **Public Comment**

David Bloomster- Commented that he had concerns about neighbors reporting on neighbors. This should not be casual and there are great consequences. This is a very slippery slope.

Nic Periera- Responded that these are really small businesses and they are trying to have a basis for evaluation.

Elise Weiland will check on privacy with county council.

Sanette Poe- Has same concerns as David Bloomster. She lives in Pocket Canyon and people take care of everyone. Feels like this is ratting people out. Real option is go to the county as you could be wrong.

David Bloomster- Do not laugh this off and consider this very slippery slope.

## **D. Residential Parking**

Kyra Wink reported the results of the survey showed that only two areas supported parking permits. Therefore, there is not enough support to move the project forward or fund a budget. She is still hoping for money for enforcement. As of now the AdHoc is dissolved as their work is completed.

## **Board Comment**

Vesta Copestakes- Could the Survey have addressed a larger area?

## **Public Comment**

Phil Grosse- Vesta this has nothing to do with beach access. There are five cars now on Hacienda blocking emergency access. The survey was faulty and is distressed that the AdHoc is disbanded.

## **E. Staff Report- Elise Weiland**

1. Monte Rio Park Update- Update on the Torr area. There are crews working on trails and limited vegetation removal. Removing cannabis and looking for options for homeless. Also looking forestry planning. The hope is that this fall some limited guided tours will begin to happen based on property cleanup.
2. Confluence- There will be a press release addressing this work and, in several weeks, a new website. Read Lynda Hopkins newsletter for updates.
3. ADA Guerneville- in 2022 Cal Trans will begin updating the road from the bridge to West Sonoma Inn. There will be some widening, crosswalks and there is hope for some beautification. Elise is in the process of meeting with key stakeholders now and there will be community meetings scheduled.

## **Council Member Comments**

Mike Nicholls commented that due to flooding issues there may not be lighted crosswalks as originally intended but overhead lights similar to what is installed on Armstrong Woods Road for Guerneville School's crossing. Nicholls He also commented that Lake Mendocino's water level is a disaster and wondered if anything is being done to modify the water curve for drought years.

Naomi Huffstutter- Summary of Naomi's comments:

Naomi's comments are about the forced consolidation by the West Sonoma County High School Union School District. 3 of the five board members voted to close El Molino high school which is the main high school for all west county students. The fight is not over. CARE and it's legal team has a court date set for September 19,2021 however they are working on an injunction prior to. If you wish to support this cause you may go to the [saveelmo.com](http://saveelmo.com) website to make a donation, and or visit our upcoming gala at the Forestville Youth Park Saturday June 19, 2021. We also have a family friendly chili cook off for \$30 per person coming up on July 18, 2021. Your entry fee includes food, drink and use of the pool as well as a live and silent auction. Thank you.

Mike Nicholls – Reported there will be a Cazadero Community Popup next Tuesday, June 22 from 4-7pm for vaccinations. Attendees will have a choice of one shot or two. Also, on July 14 there will be a second clinic offering two shot process.

**H. Proclamations-** none

**I. Call for agenda items**

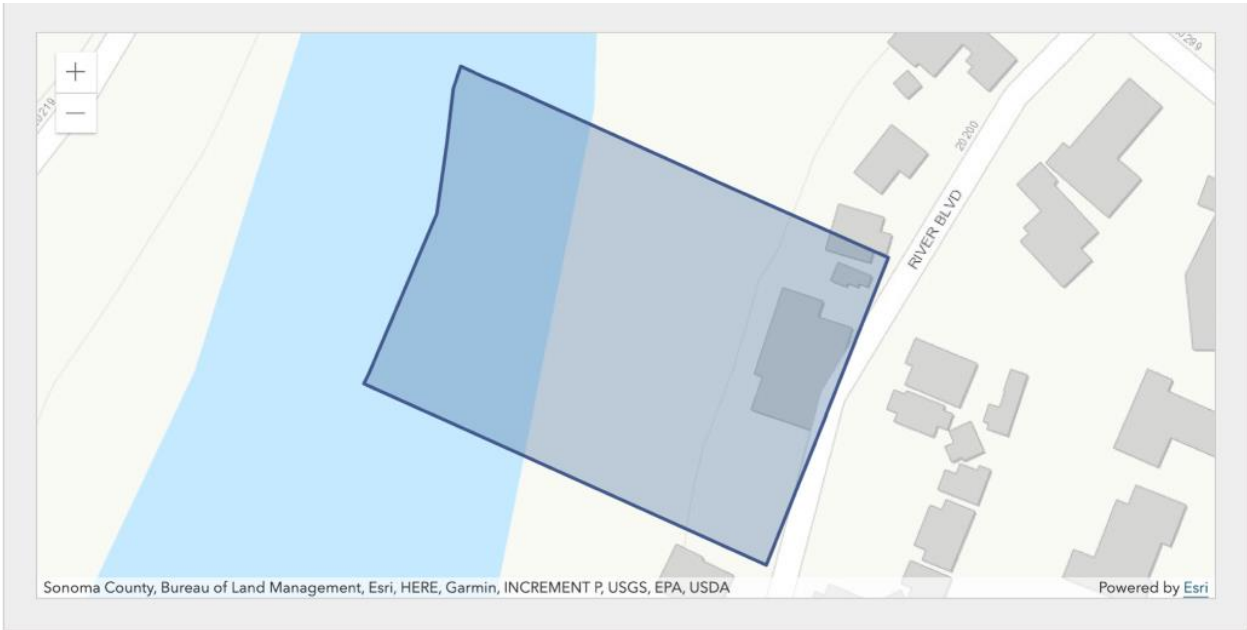
Vesta Copestakes asked for Vacation Rentals

Nothing suggested by the public

**J. Adjournment**

Chair Pip Marquez de la Plata sought a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:42pm. Nic Periera made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Lisa Nahmanson. The motion carried 8-0-0.

Attachment Ad Hoc Rental Snapshots Appendix A



[Print Permit Summary Table](#)

[Parcel Detail](#)   **[Permit History](#)**   [Documents](#)

[« Return to Parcel Search](#)

### Permit Filtering

**Display Permits By Category:**

[Show All \(32\)](#)

[Planning \(2\)](#)   
 [Well and Septic \(7\)](#)   
 [Building \(16\)](#)   
 [Enforcement \(7\)](#)

Or

**Filter By Permit Number:**

### Resources

**Phone Operator**  
 Email: [PermitSonoma@sonoma-county.org](mailto:PermitSonoma@sonoma-county.org)  
 Phone: (707) 565-1900  
 CA Relay Service: 711

**Permit Center & Mailing Address**  
 Permit Sonoma  
 2550 Ventura Avenue  
 Santa Rosa, CA 95403

**General Resources**

- [Records Counter »](#)
- [Permit Numbering Information »](#)

**Zoning & Land Use Resources**

- [Active Map: Zoning & Land Use »](#)
- [General Plan 2020 »](#)
- [Zoning Code Designations Explained »](#)

Email: [Planner@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Planner@sonoma-county.org)  
 Phone: (707) 565-1900, option 5  
 CA Relay Service: 711

### TVR18-0074 - Transient Rentals

**Permit Number:** TVR18-0074      **Status:** Done  
5/8/2018

**Permit Type:** Transient Rentals - Vacation

**Applicant:** Stephen O'Hara

**Permit Description:**  
 Request for a Zoning Permit for a three bedroom Vacation Rental in an existing single family residence with a maximum overnight occupancy of ten (10) people. 24-hour contact 650-291-4688



# COUNTY OF SONOMA

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- Hosted Rental Permit
- Property Managers
- Complaints
- Vacation Rentals Ordinance**
- Exclusion Combining District
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Contact Us



## Updated Vacation Rentals Ordinance

On November 4, 2014, the Board of Supervisors directed staff to make revisions to the Vacation Rental Ordinance after an extensive public outreach campaign. Revisions have been made to address issues related to the potential loss of permanent housing stock, property manager requirements and responsibilities, and monitoring and enforcement of vacation rental rules. A revised Vacation Rentals Ordinance was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on March 15, 2016, with an effective date of April 14, 2016. Materials from the series of meetings are available below.

**Vacation Rentals** – [Revised Vacation Rentals Ordinance \(PDF: 73 kB\)](#)

**Hosted Rentals** – [Special Use Standards for Hosted Rentals and Bed and Breakfast Inns \(PDF: 39 kB\)](#)

**Note:** The vacation rentals ordinance has not been adopted for the Sonoma coast (e.g. Sea Ranch, Bodega Bay) and is not applicable to rentals in those communities.



From: Russian River MAC <vesta@sonic.net>  
Subject: New Entry: Short-Term Vacation Rentals Information  
Date: May 26, 2021 at 3:45:24 PM PDT  
To: vesta@sonic.net

**Vacation Rental Street  
Address**

16768 Guerneville Rd

**City/State/Zip**

Guerneville CA 95446

**LRRMAC District ( see map below )**

Guerneville District = #4

**Does this Short-term rental have a posted notice with  
contact information in case of problems or emergencies?**

no

Sent from [Russian River MAC](#)



