

John Mills

CEO of [Watch Duty](#), a 501(c)(3) non-profit

john@watchduty.org

[linkedin.com/in/johnclarkemills/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/johnclarkemills/)

3000 Sweetwater Springs Road

Healdsburg, CA 95448

Mission

The property at 3000 Sweetwater Springs Road in Healdsburg was purchased with the sole mission to create a place that will support life, including the forest, the animals that reside within it, as well as the basic needs of our community and humanity as a whole. Since moving to this property in 2020 we formed a 501(c)(3) non-profit (*EIN 87-1454433*) to legally house all of the activities that go on here, including [Watch Duty](#), our most audacious project yet. This place has already been a hub of innovation for the community and with this barn we can go even further.

Barn Purpose

The proposed barn is being created to uphold and maintain the agreement set forth by the Williamson Act as well as the mission of our 501(c)(3).

The primary goal for this barn is to house heavy equipment and other tools to maintain this property and the animals we will be supporting. This open space design allows for us to move tools and equipment in and out of the barn, maintain them, as well as house animals when the time comes. Wildfire being a big part of our existence here it is important that I can shelter all my equipment and animals in case we are trapped here. We already have high pressure gravity water fed to this site as well as off-grid power so we feel confident in this location and its defensibility.

The barn's secondary purpose is to serve as a classroom and cultural space to support the research that is taking place here, both by us, the research scientists, and local fire officials. Nearly everything in this workshop will be movable so we can clear the space to host the Open Space researchers and their students as well as our non-profit and partners.

Building Envelope

The current building envelope ("current building envelope" on the map) that is 37,800 square feet is not in a suitable location for a multitude of reasons. The main and most obvious is that it is within 150 feet of Porter Creek, a riparian corridor, and should never have been approved. Not only that, the soils are not suitable for building without extensive work nor is the road suitable for large construction equipment. The work to make this site suitable is cost prohibitive

and may cost more than the entire building. To make matters worse, there is no power, water, or septic at this site.

The proposed area (“proposed building envelope” on the map) is a 1-to-1 swap of the 37,800 square feet to a more suitable location which will cause less disturbance to the land.

New Building Envelope Specifications

- Far away from any riparian corridor or watershed
- Already been filled and flattened by the previous owners so we wouldn't be disturbing anything native
- Tribal councils have already been notified and signed off that this is a non-historic site
- Biological studies have concluded there is nothing important here and has already been filled
- The site sits on a non-scenic road
- The current driveway infrastructure will serve this barn so we don't have to disturb any more earth

Williamson Activities on Property

Coho Salmon and Steelhead Trout program (UCSD, UCD, CA Fish & Game)

- Hatchery and releasing fish
- Monitoring & study (pit tags and radio transponders)
- More habitable pools for fish (logs are placed in the creek to create them)

Water addition program

- Renewed contract with Gallo Vineyards next door to release water into Porter Creek

Forest Management (**new since purchase**)

- Working with Jason Wells (USFS #3014) of Sonoma RCD to create a forest management plan consisting of forest thinning, pruning, and controlled burns
- Working with Gallo (contract from FEMA) to create fire breaks along our property lines

Wildlife research (**new since purchase**)

- Working with several other wildlife agencies to study the fauna of the area
- Mountain Lion studies have been conducted by the IWS
- Fish studies are increasing with Fish & Game
- I am currently searching for more scientists who want to research on this property

Wildfire R&D (**new since purchase**)

- Built and scaled Watch Duty on this property which is now covering wildfires across the state and currently supporting ¼ million users.
- Working with Sonoma County Department of Transportation and Public Works to host a General Mobile Radio Service (GMRS) repeater and other communications infrastructure to support communities during emergencies
 - [Mills GMRS Site.pdf](#)
- Worked with Geyserville Fire to understand the pre-attack map problem, ultimately opting to build this into Watch Duty in the future.

- Advise various companies on their wildfire strategies, often using my own land or friends land for testing.
- Donated land to [Pano.ai](#) to station one of their AI wildfire detection cameras
- Hosting various demonstrations of wildfire technologies and ideas from around the area
 - Here is a video of the potential barn site where we ran a demonstration of a 'Burn Bot' to help automate controlled burn lines. In attendance were various officials, fire marshals, etc you will recognize from the region:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IFu4j_a3gIE

Future Williamson Activities on Property

Small grazing animals

- Goats or sheep to help with vegetation management

Small farm & chickens

- We have started a small ½ acre farm behind my current house

Research

- We would like to continue the wildlife research that has been taking place here

Building Specifications

The barn, like the rest of the building on property, will be built out of sustainably sourced materials while being incredibly fire resistant as well as beautiful. It will also run on the same off-grid system power system that we are currently using as the nearest power pole is a mile away. We are hoping to be a role model for others to demonstrate big infrastructure and equipment without the need for fossil fuels.

Building Specifications

- One large open 50x60' space, no walls or stalls
- Half-bath suitable for an Ag building
- Slab on grade
- FSC post & beam with steel tensioned roof
- Corrugated steel roof
- Indoor and outdoor wildfire sprinklers like the main residence

Team

The team consists of many local engineers, builders, and neighbors. We are blessed to work with many people who have been working on this property since the previous owners purchased

it, many of whom have become friends. Their knowledge of this land and the area has been critical to understanding how to work with the natural habitat as well as the community.

General Contractor

Gina Centoni in San Francisco

restored our house in San Francisco (sanfranvic.com)

Timber Frame Engineers

Timber Creations in Santa Rosa

Geotechnical

PJC & Associates in Rohnert Park

Structural

MKM & Associates in Rohnert Park

Communications Infrastructure

Sonoma County Department of Transportation and Public Works

Conclusion

Thank you for taking the time to read this document and considering us for an amendment to our Williamson Act Contract. It has been a pleasure living in Sonoma County, building community here, and helping to create a safer and more preposterous environment for all. With this new workshop we will be able to do more and go farther, not only on this land, but for the larger community as well.