

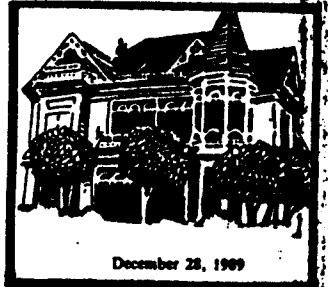
The Ferndale Enterprise

FERNDALE, HUMBOLDT COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

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Church of Spiritual Technology Began Buying Land in 1980

The Church of Spiritual Technology began buying land in The Mattole in 1980 and is paying taxes on the more than 3,000 acres it owns there, according to reports in the County Assessor's office.

The county apparently has given permission to the church to build its "quasi-public archival storage facility" for church documents and a new "primary residence" on the land on which two ranch houses already exist.

One, the former Ben Walker home, has been remodeled for the present caretaker. The new house, 400 feet away, is in the process of being constructed and has a deep basement, with a ramp big enough for a truck. It is supposed to be for "operation of the farm."

The Planning Department, according to a letter to the church, also looks favorably on the construction of a retreat, saying "...other similar recreational uses have in the past been determined to be compatible with these zones."

Zones referred to are Agricultural Exclusive and Timber Production. The letter was written by Thomas Conlon, planning director.

There are also reports of a paved, two lane road built, leading to the mountain top vault, and no record, thus far, of an Environmental Impact Report. An unpaved road was in place.

Neither Conlon nor Linda Evans, who was said to be in charge of the church file, nor Kirk Gothier, second to Conlon, was available for comment.

The church has given various addresses: 5265 Fountain Avenue, Hollywood; Leo Johnson, 314 West Fifth Street, San Bernardino; Michel Oullette, Box 183, Petrolia; and in care of R.H. Emmerson and Son, Box 90614, Redding, although unconfirmed reports say paychecks to construction crews are coming from Whittier. A.A. Emmerson, the son of R.H. Emmerson, is president of Sierra Pacific Industries.