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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FORT BRAGG GETS A COASTLINE

For the first time in 150 years, the city of Fort Bragg can claim its own coastline.

On January 5, 2010, the Mendocino County community of 7,000 acquired 92 acres of the former Georgia-Pacific mill site, which stretches for 3½ miles along most of the city's oceanfront. The city's newly acquired property will be used for a park and a long-awaited stretch of the California Coastal Trail.

"For more than 100 years Fort Bragg's identity was largely based on its lumber mills, and now the former mill site will become the new face of the city," said Fort Bragg Mayor Doug Hammerstrom. "Once it is opened to the public, the coastal parkland will be a major component of the city's ongoing transformation from a mill town to a multi-dimensional community and a prime destination for visitors to California's north coast."

Although the sale is complete, for the next two years, public access will be restricted as plans and development of the parkland and trails takes place and the dream of an open coast becomes a reality.

The city purchased part of its new property using a \$4.2 million grant from the State Coastal Conservancy, and Georgia-Pacific donated a 100-foot-wide corridor encompassing over 57 acres along the site's coastal bluffs for a trail.

The city's acquisition had been in the works since about the time the mill closed in 2002. Early on, the city worked closely with the Coastal Conservancy and Georgia-Pacific to examine potential uses of the site, and a series of public workshops made it clear that local residents were united in their desire for a coastline that is open to the public.

"We have never had the opportunity to open the entire coastline of a city in one fell swoop," said Sam Schuchat, executive officer of the Coastal Conservancy. "A public coastline in Fort Bragg will be a tremendous recreational and economic asset not just for the city, but for the entire north coast of California."

The closing of the Georgia-Pacific mill marked the end of an era for Fort Bragg and spawned fears that the city's economy would crumble. The city has rebounded, however, with its unique blend of natural resources, recreational opportunities and scenery.

The property's main trail corridor is slated to become part of the California Coastal Trail, which will eventually extend 1,200 miles along the entire coastline of California. More than half of the Coastal Trail is already complete, and new sections are being added in all parts of the state's coast.

The Coastal Conservancy is a state agency that works with the people of California to protect and improve the coast and San Francisco Bay. The Conservancy has helped open more than 100 miles of coast and bay shores to the public and preserve more than 300,000 acres of wetlands, wildlife habitat, parks, and farmland.

NOTE: Questions with respect to this information should be directed to Fort Bragg City Manager Linda Ruffing at (707) 961-2829 or Coastal Conservancy Project Manager Matt Gerhart at (510) 286-0317.