

Humboldt County Planning Commission
Humboldt County Courthouse
Eureka, California 95501

Re: General Plan Land Use Element Chapter 5 - Forest Resources 5.3 Segment (August 16, 2007)

Dear Commissioners:

Why are we here doing a re-write of Chapter 5 – Forest Resources 5.3 Segment covering TPZ and T zoned lands?

An honest and open review finds existing General Plan Alternative D is doing the job. Real world numbers from planning staff and other sources say conversion of “T” zoned forest land to other uses has been minor. These numbers show tax incentives and handling of TPZ lands is allowing landowners to retain timberlands in timber production. Deleting Article II (New Merger section) as recommended by Forest Review Committee will strengthen current incentives.

Where is the beef (problem) on lands zoned TPZ?

Heavy regulatory restrictions, physical land limitations, and development permit requirements prevent development on the lion’s share of TPZ zoned lands.

Professionally done development that follows all the stringent rules actually provides a lot of benefits such as increased tax revenues, increased fire fighting ability, and increased oversight of the land.

Why are the following listed real world locations and causes of open space development problems being ignored?

- Lands not zoned TPZ,
- Inadequate enforcement of development regulations
- Inadequate funding of public services.

Until a separate section is created in the General Plan that specifically identifies and discusses the real problems, the open space development boogey man will never be factually confronted.

When the General Plan is full of technical land use conclusions and California requires forestry work to be done by a California Registered Professional Forester (RPF), why has there been a lack of effort to get experienced RPF and landowner input?

Even the inability of the county’s Forest Review Committee to do more than discuss restrictions on already severely restricted TPZ lands illustrates a lack of interest in experienced RPF and landowner input.

Planning staff have replaced RPF input with Andrea Tuttle’s input; however, her extensive overview experience lacks needed hands-on site specific handling of landowner problems. I know

Andrea as a nice person, but she is not an RPF, and she has presented some ideas and information that have not undergone adequate peer review.

In closing, some feelings provided by Planning Commission members need to be revisited.

1. It was felt public and other special interests will not go away unless more regulation on land use is provided to feed the open space development boogey man.
2. It was felt having county staff duplicate review and regulatory procedures already handled by a multitude of public agencies is not a bad thing.
3. It was felt care is needed to avoid not creating General Plan policies that push open space landowners to sell the land for other uses.

In reviewing these thoughts, Planning Commissioners need to put themselves into the position of landowners. Each commissioner needs to closely review my flow chart and answer the following questions before making decisions on General Plan open space restrictions.

1. Will General Plan push landowners to drop production of food and other resource products as a highest and best use?
2. Will the little gain if any from having county duplicate research and review already done by other public agencies be worth the added permit delay and added costs for county and permittees?
3. Is pushing open space landowners into conservation easements, carbon credit schemes, and public land trust sales that reduce the proper production of natural resource products and eliminate economic supports and tax revenues a good idea?
4. Will General Plan requirements reduce production of food and other natural resource products and increase our dependence on questionably safe imports routinely produced to the detriment of third world countries?
5. Will the General Plan provide incentives for landowners to willingly hold onto open space lands, to produce natural resource products, to provide well paying jobs that keep youth in the area and provide the means for affordable housing, and to provide economic supports and tax revenues that are needed to keep Humboldt County going?

Yours,



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To: Humboldt County Governmental bodies 1/19/06.

**THE REAL WORLD OF ZONING, LAND USE RESTRICTIONS, AND
LOCKING UP NATURAL RESOURCE USE AND OPEN SPACE LANDS**
(History tells us the following)

**ONGOING UNJUSTIFIED RESTRICTIONS ON NATURAL RESOURCE USE
AND THE LAND**

(Fourth Branch of Government abuses, regulations, zoning, etc.)

Will lead to

**LESS INCOME FROM THE LAND
LOWER LAND VALUES**

LESS ABILITY TO FULFILL FINANCIAL NEEDS

(Loans, partial sales, loss of breadwinner, family needs, educational needs, tax requirements)

Leads to

**REDUCED INCENTIVES TO HOLD THE LAND
REDUCED SATISFACTION AND ABILITY TO HOLD OPEN SPACED LANDS
IN OPEN SPACE CONDITION**

Leads to

**SELLING LAND TO:
DEVELOPERS AND DEVELOPMENT
PUBLIC TRUSTS (WILDERNESS, PARKS, ETC.)
CONVERTING LANDS TO CONSERVATION EASEMENTS**

Leads To

**LESS JUSTIFIED USE OF NATURAL RESOURCES
LOSS OF INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDED TO PRODUCE NATURAL RESOURCE PRODUCTS
LOSS OF LOCAL, STATE, FEDERAL TAX REVENUES
LOSS OF RURAL COMMUNITY ECONOMIC SUPPORTS**

Leads To

**LOSS OF OPEN SPACE LANDS IN PRIVATE OWNERSHIP
BYE BYE RURAL COMMUNITIES**

Why are we ignoring what history tells us and the obvious. Lose the satisfaction and financial ability to hold onto open space land as open space land and you lose the ability to produce natural resources products and economic supports needed to keep rural communities going.

Yours,

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