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Humboldt County Planning Commission
Humboldt County Courthouse
Eureka, CA 95501

HUMBOLDT COUNTY
PLANNING COMMISSION

Dear Commissioners:

You are being asked to review a laboriously long re-write and changed Humboldt County General Plan Document dated 11/20/08. I will simply say "Good Luck" and ask you consider the following input.

The first thing that caught my eye about this document is the requirement that the county spend a lot of time and money duplicating inventory, mapping, and permitting work already handled by State Water Quality Agency, California Department of Forestry, California Department of Fish and Game, and other governmental agencies. As a professional field forester that has worked with a lot of rural folks, I could not help but notice how the plan requires county staff to do all kinds of Rare, Threatened, and Endangered species inventory, mapping, and permit work, all kinds of watershed and water quality inventory, mapping, and permit work, all kinds of stream and wetland inventory, mapping, and permit work, erosion, pollution, and other plan work (page 11-13), and on and on. The Mineral, Cultural, and Waste Management elements of the report show less duplication of other existing agencies' protective work which makes sense as this approach allows wanted protection and county review without spending taxpayer money and staff time it does not have. I leave you with one question about this unjustified, cumbersome, costly, and wasteful duplication of effort that adds to already confusing and cumbersome permitting processes, **"Why?"**

FR-P3 Timber Management Regulations says: Support fewer, more effective and lower-cost timber management regulations as a strategy to maintain production as the primary use of forestlands. Coordinate County polices so they are compatible with State Forest Practice Act and State Forest Practice Rules. This makes sense for more than timber management issues.

I say the following simple language should be made a part of the total document: **Support fewer, more effective and lower-cost regulations as a strategy to maintain the rural life style. Coordinate County polices so they are compatible with other existing regulatory bodies and avoid duplication of work done by other existing regulatory bodies.**

If this General Plan Document is a listing of goals, why have specifics such as untested and proposed development density numbers (that will be part of later ordinance determinations) in this report. Isn't this putting the cart before the horse?

I see a lot of favoritism for Conservation Easements and set aside arrangements in the report.

While the regulatory situation is forcing a lot of folks into such arrangements and I can not fault landowners for getting what equity they can out of their land, many of these arrangements routinely and unjustifiably reduce and shut down full, proper, and wise use of natural resources, and this adversely affects rural folks and this county. Simply put, not requiring continued full, proper, and wise use of resources allows manufacturing infrastructure to be killed off, local tax revenues to dwindle, and eliminates the things that keep rural communities viable and alive. The report touches on the value of the timber industry to the area (page 4-37 and page 9-2) and the value of maintaining open space and the quality of life it provides (page 9-5); however, the report never really states the true position of the timber resource industry as number one in economies not supported by governmental taxpayer dollars. **To illustrate the impact from not fully, properly, and wisely using natural resources, look around and you will see trees, trees, and trees. Then, ask yourself why this area's timber industry has shrunk to the few mills it has and why this area is economically in trouble even in good times when we have so many trees and so much open space.**

The report needs a goal of (do not use-?????no net????) minimizing loss of full, proper, and wise use of natural resources and the economic benefits they provide.

Under PL-P5 Eminent Domain. The County shall not support acquisitions through eminent domain, unless it is found to be:

- A. The last option after the opportunity to mutual agreement has been exhausted; or
- B. In the interest or public health, safety, and welfare; or
- C. Required to protect public rights; or
- D. Necessary to national security.

If "A" simply says there is no meeting of the minds, why is it even listed? Is this simply a way to leave the door open for a governmental body to say "Sorry Charlie, but if you won't agree to sell, you lose?"

Away we go, not knowing where we go, but going; because those with the power make us go the way we go.

Yours,

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