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From: amanda waterdown [mailto:awaterdown@gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, April 28, 2011 4:03 PM

To: Spencer, Martha

Subject: Public Comment on the GPU

April 28, 2011

County of Humboldt

Department of Community Development Services

Planning Division

3015 H Street

Eureka Ca, 95501

Re: General Plan Update/ 10.7 Scenic Resources

Dear County Planning Commission Members:

Having recently attended a planning commission meeting, and being able to get a feel for how these public meetings pan out from previously recorded sessions, I feel that there is a lot to be said for the amount of information that the commissioners have to deal with. I appreciate the efforts that have been put into trying to come to appropriate compromises when reviewing the general plan update covers and working to help everyone to feel they have been heard is quite a task, so I thank you for taking time to read my comment.

I'm writing to address the upcoming review of scenic resources within Humboldt County. With special focus being paid to scenic roads and the background information provided, along with the policy 10 (wayfarers signage) to advertise for these scenic areas.

The reason I want to focus on the scenic roads, is mainly because I think that even though most of the scenic areas in Humboldt County have dirt roads and limited accessibility, that they are generally usable for most vehicles. I've traveled along these roads and visited many of the scenic alternative routes within this county, its one of the main reasons I chose to attend Humboldt State, and I think that making these roads accessible for a larger annual visitor size would greatly detriment their value, and the value of the scenery they allow those who use them to enjoy. Many instances where I have been traveling along these roads I've been impressed by the amount of maintenance that goes into their upkeep, and I have seen many people taking time to maintain the roads. Their upkeep may not be in the general plan for the scenic resources update, but if there is policy to bring in more visitors to these areas than I would feel confident in believing that the value of these areas would decrease as a result. In many of the more open and accessible public scenic options there is a larger anthropogenic damage to ecology and results in a decrease in the areas environmental quality, by keeping these areas lightly accessible they have less human effects and retain their value for longer.

There is some wording that I am also uncomfortable with, which is why I am so concerned about the construction of better roads on these off-track scenic routes. In the background section under the header "scenic roads" there is a phrase, "to establish a system of scenic routes" which I am inclined to believe means that construction on new roads in "scenic" areas will begin upon the passing of this policy. I've researched a few publications that deal with road construction in forest habitat and the effects of these roads weather they are dirt, gravel or paved have a detrimental impact that in many cases leads to an overall degradation of the surrounding biodiversity.

I'm sure that the board will make a conscientious decision on these policies, like they have been with the rest of the general plan, but I would hope that they would let the ecological value of these scenic areas not be out-shined by their economical value, and that if construction is to proceed on new scenic roads, or if older roads are to be refurbished there will be an impact on the local ecosystem which will cause that habitat to lose the beauty and natural aspects that make it so enjoyable.

Thank you for your consideration,

Amanda Waterdown

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I've attached the articles that I read In preparation for sending this letter, i hope you find them informative and useful.