

To the Humboldt County Planning Commission
Regarding: GPU Water Element Chapter 11

Dear Commissioners,

A principle that has been known since the Industrial Revolution states that increased efficiency increases consumption. That is the paradox at work here in the water element that says water storage is water for the purposes of development.

The South Fork Eel River is what is being consumed to death for the purposes of development and "economic growth" everywhere in Southern Humboldt County.

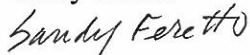
Take the plan for the Mattole watershed to have land-owners install tanks and promise not to withdraw water from the Mattole in low flow times. In the precedent already set in the Mattole watershed (Goth), people are allowed to subdivide property without sufficient water by installing a tank and calling it water. What is not mentioned in this scheme is that if the land-owner doesn't "catch" enough water in the winter, water is purchased from private water companies who draw the water from the South Fork Eel River and sell it outside the GSD water district.

The cumulative impacts of this development friendly policy at the expense of the State and Federally listed Wild and Scenic South Fork Eel River are in intolerable. Just this one example constitutes many and ever-expanding small water grabs on the South Fork Eel. The South Fork Eel River must not go to fostering development in other watersheds. There is not enough water in the SF Eel, and the county water policy as proposed will not protect the federally listed coho and Chinook salmon, steelhead, the Evolutionary Significant Units and other endangered species.

Please institute a water neutral policy on the South Fork Eel River. Water neutral means no new water draws without retiring an existing one. State and Federal wildlife habitat protection, the Federal Clean Water Act and our obligation to where we live require that the South Fork Eel River be specifically protected in writing in the General Plan Update.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sandy Feretto



Garberville

