

**ATTACHMENT 5**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**



March 15, 2021

**To: Humboldt County Planning Commissioners**

Alan Bongio	District 1
Ronnie Pellegrini	District 2
Noah Levy	District 3
Mike L Newman	District 4
Peggy O'Neill	District 5
Melanie McCavour	At-Large
Brian Mitchell	At-Large

cc: Joshua Z. Dorris, Planning Department

**From: 350 Humboldt**

**Subject: Hatchery Road Solar Project**

Dear Commissioners:

350 Humboldt, a local grass roots climate action group, supports the permit application for the Hatchery Road Solar Project. This project will reduce our dependence on the natural gas fired power plant on Humboldt Bay, thus reducing the county's greenhouse gas emissions. The power the project provides will help mitigate the fact that Humboldt County peak power utilization exceeds the capacity of the transmission lines into the County. It will be a move in the right direction of enabling RCEA to achieve the 100% renewable electricity by 2025 that it has committed to.

The general plan designation for the parcels is agricultural and the plan specifies that renewable electricity installations are allowed. The property will not be converted out of agricultural. The use of the property for bee habitat and/or sheep grazing have been successful at other solar installations around the world. The Planning Department CEQA document evaluates the use of agricultural land for solar in great detail, and the decision to approve this project is clearly based on significant and careful consideration. It should be noted that the underlying land, soil condition, or land use are not changed permanently, as they might be with other projects. The developer spent considerable time trying to find a suitable site on brown lands or other non-agricultural lands but was unsuccessful. The chosen solution is close to ideal and has the added benefit of helping to ensure the owner of the land can remain in farming.

Some comments have suggested aesthetics is a problem. But as the Planning Department document says: "Viewer response may be negative for viewers who place a high value on open space, *or positive for viewers who place a high value on renewable energy*. The limited expanse of the project feature and the limited importance of the affected viewpoints result in the impacts being less than significant."

Under CEQA, possible impacts are significant or not. This project has very few significant impacts and the County agrees that all of them can be mitigated to insignificance. As the



Planning Department document summarizes: “The project will not degrade the quality of the environmental, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal. Although no special status species were observed on the project site, potential biological impacts related to special status bird species would be reduced to less than significant levels... In the event archaeological artifacts are found [mitigation measures] would reduce potential impacts to less than significant levels... Therefore, impacts would be considered less than significant with mitigation incorporated.”

Given the clear benefits the project will bring to Humboldt County (and the planet) and the lack of any unmitigated significant impacts, we urge you to support the Hatchery Road Solar Project conditional use permit.

Thank you very much for considering our views.

Daniel Chandler  
Hayley Connors-Keith  
Pat Carr  
Katy Gurin

350 Humboldt Steering Committee  
350Humboldt@gmail.com

Merritt Perry  
P.O. Box 677  
Blue Lake, CA 95525  
February 25, 2021

Mr. Dorris  
Humboldt County Department of Planning and Building  
3015 H Street  
Eureka, CA 95501

**Subject:           Comments on Hatchery Road Solar Project Mitigated Negative Declaration  
State Clearing House Number 2021010092**

Mr. Dorris:

I have reviewed the ISMND for the proposed small scale electrical generating facility on APNs 313-091-019 and 313-091-020 owned by the Victor Guynup Trust and the Dorthea Guynup Trust. I recognize that more solar is necessary to reduce greenhouse gasses and to provide an alternative clean energy future, but this is a good project in the wrong place. This project will convert prime agricultural land to an industrial solar farm will likely result in a significant impact to the environment and has not been adequately analyzed under CEQA.

The proposed project will have a potentially significant aesthetic impact by degrading a view at one of the more important recreation areas in Humboldt County. This project will also result in the permanent conversion of prime agricultural land in contradiction to the Humboldt County General Plan and the PEIR completed for that plan. I understand the desire, to have a sustainable source of clean renewable energy generated in Humboldt County, but this project sets a dangerous precedent with the conversion of prime agricultural land to industrial use, that could portend a significant change of the environment in Humboldt County.

I have lived near the project area in two different locations for over 20 years and am very familiar with this area, and the recreation opportunities that originate near the project site are one of the primary reasons I chose to live and stay here. The recreation opportunities are enhanced by wonderful views and the bucolic setting established by the surrounding agricultural uses. This project will abruptly change the environment in the surrounding area and create permanent impacts to the environment.

Following are my comments categorized by impact type:



### **Aesthetic Impacts**

1. Aesthetic impacts were not adequately evaluated for the proposed project. A “scenic vista” is considered a viewpoint that provides expansive views of a highly valued landscape for the benefit of the general public (Humboldt County FEIR, 2017) and include major public roadways and public areas providing views of the coast, forests, open space or agricultural lands. No analysis of viewer types and volumes, viewer exposure or visual sensitivity were evaluated, if they had been, it is likely that the analysis would conclude that the existing visual character at that location would be substantially degraded. Placing solar panels within the viewshed at that location will create a sharp contrast to the surroundings and will demand the viewers’ attention and will distract from the existing views that currently exist.

The area at the top of Hatchery Road is an important view point used for generations and enjoyed by over a thousand visitors annually. The access point to the proposed project is a staging area for mountain biking, fishing, blackberry picking and river access. On any given day it is not uncommon to see more than 30 vehicles at any given time parked along the entire top of the project site near the proposed access point. **Photo 1, attached shows a day this February when the site is being used by fishermen, mountain bikers and dog walkers.** The site is especially busy during peak periods of steelhead run in January and February, and during the summer months when river goers that access the river via the private logging road that borders the southern portion of the site. The spring, summer and fall is the peak for mountain biking which stage adjacent at the top of the site to access the very popular Hatchery Ridge Mountain Bike Trails. All of these events attract over a thousand recreational users a year and it is common to see people taking drives on the weekend just to observe the views and turn around at this location. The Green Diamond Road that runs along the southerly boundary of the site is so frequently used by the public that Green Diamond is seeking to work with a local agency (Personal Communication with Green Diamond Management January 2021) to make this access road a permanent river access point.

The area of Hatchery Road adjacent to the project site used for recreation overlooks the project site and existing agricultural fields, the gallery forest of the Mad River below and Blue Lake and the surrounding hills that form the Mad River Valley in Blue Lake. The area at the top of Hatchery Road is directly adjacent to the proposed solar site and directly adjacent to the proposed access point. This is an incredibly scenic vista and one that should be protected. **Photo 2-3 shows the view from the Hatchery Road near the proposed access point and the quality of the view at this location is very scenic.** It is common to see deer herds gathering here in spring on the high quality pastures at this location.

The proposed project will include solar panels that are 8’ high on over 26 acres that will be visible and detract from the view from the popular staging area at the top of Hatchery Road.

Only a brief description of aesthetic impacts is provided with little to no analysis. The conclusion that the “the new construction associated with the solar arrays will create a new visual improvement” is misleading and not based on any type of evaluation to support this conclusion. It is little more than a description that could be created by looking at google earth and a conclusion not based on data, visual simulations, or type of analysis.

The ISMND does not provide any analysis of the use of the area and the importance of the view location. There is no analysis in the ISMND that allows the public to ascertain whether or not the project will result in an aesthetic impact. The industry standard to communicate the visual impacts from a project such as this is to develop a visual simulation that creates a rendering of the project using a computer generated image of the proposed facility over the existing landscape as a basis to compare the proposed project to the existing condition. The ISMND instead relies on the fact that Hatchery Road is not designated as a scenic highway and two scant paragraphs that inadequately describe the impacts of the project and ultimately state that some people may find them attractive and others may not by stating “Viewer response may be negative for viewers who place a high value on open space, or positive for viewers who place a high value on renewable energy”. Although this statement may be true, the project is proposed in a location that hundreds of visitors a year come to enjoy open space and the outdoors. The proposed setback from the roadway will not reduce the ability of the project to be seen, as it slopes away from the gathering area at the topo of Hatchery Road and the entire project will be visible from that location. The statement that the PVs are low profile because they are lower than roof top mounted panels makes no sense for comparison, as the project site is working pasture land and not a neighborhood or developed area. No spec sheets or pictures of the equipment are provided with the ISMND and therefore it is not possible to know what the visual impacts are or evaluate the aesthetic impacts independently.

The ISMND also states that 6500 feet of chain link security fencing with barbed wire will be installed around the project area with gates for access. Typically security fences are at least six feet high and the barbed wire placed above six feet to prevent people from climbing the fence. This fence will cause recreational users to have to look through barbed wire and chain link fence to see the views from the popular gathering area at the top of Hatchery Road and along the Green Diamond Access Road. This will severely diminish the views in this area by introducing new features to the site that are uncharacteristic of the area, and that will be visually dominant in the viewshed. Additionally, only being able to observe the view through a chain link fence, will create a high degree of visual change at this location. There are potentially ways that this could be mitigated, such by increasing the setback from Hatchery Road, and placing the fence down the hill so it can be looked over instead of through, however no mitigations are proposed. Such a setback could also be vegetated with medium height shrubs to reduce the visual contrast between the project site and the road.

This project should not be considered until even a basic evaluation of aesthetic impacts is completed that quantifies the heavy use of the project area for recreation and photo simulations are developed that allow the public to understand the proposed aesthetic impact, and a meaningful evaluation is completed. It is likely that if a competent analysis is completed that it will show that there is a potentially significant impact to the aesthetics that may or may not be able to be mitigated. If not mitigated an Environmental Impact Report is required to be completed under CEQA.

CEQA guidelines state that a project in an area of moderate to high visual sensitivity with a project that will create a moderate to high visual change in the landscape and in accordance with CEQA guidelines should be considered an adverse and potentially significant impact.

**\*\*Note**, some photo simulations were shown at the Blue Lake City Council Meeting on 2/23/21 that are misleading and neglect to show the solar arrays closest to Hatchery Road that would exist immediately outside of the field of view of the simulations and do not incorporate the site security fencing. These simulations were not provided to the public with the ISMND and without adequate time to be considered available for public review.

### **Agricultural Impacts**

2. The proposed project will result in a net loss of agricultural exclusive designated lands (AE) in direct contradiction of the policies in the Humboldt County General Plan. The County's General Plan AG-P6 requires no net loss of agricultural land in AE designated lands unless there are no feasible alternatives and an overriding public interest finding is made. The analysis presented does not present evidence that there was a reasonable exploration of feasible alternatives and therefore this project is not consistent with the County's general plan policy. No effort was presented as a part of this analysis that demonstrates that any other feasible alternatives were explored, despite the fact that they are known to exist.

Feasible locations on former developed sites are well documented in the thesis completed by Michael Avcollie in 2017 concluded that there are former mill sites available for solar production that far exceed the county's demand and the production level of 4MW that would be produced by this project. The thesis states:

*"Overall there were 37 sites with enough available area to host 148 MW of PV capacity, limited to 18 MW given the current constraints on utility grid hosting capacity. Using these sites could satisfy the local demand for 15 MW of utility-scale solar PV without significant grid upgrades. The sites with the greatest potential were the Pilot Lumber, Hoopa Timber,*

*Cal Pac, Pacific Lumber Fortuna, Blue Lake Biomass, Pacific Lumber Yager Camp, Crown Simpson Mill, Georgia Pacific, DG Fairhaven and Cascade Forest sites.”*

Although some of the sites identified in this thesis are designated for other purposes, many of these sites remain vacant and remain feasible for solar energy production and have the potential to be a feasible alternative to the current proposed project that would convert agricultural land.

The county should not make an overriding public interest finding to allow conversion of the agricultural land to an industrial use at this site until it is demonstrated, and documented, that other feasible alternatives do not exist. In fact, there are many locations outside of Humboldt County that could produce solar energy at a lower cost and agricultural land conversion should not be accepted for solar projects. Approving this project would set a dangerous precedent in Humboldt County and could lead to significant losses of agricultural land in contradiction to the County’s General Plan Policy for no net loss of agricultural land and have a higher cost for energy production than developing solar projects elsewhere. RCEA Executive Director Matthew Marshall stated in the scoping meeting for the ISMND for this project that lower cost solar projects could be completed in other areas outside of Humboldt County and have a higher level of production than the proposed site.

3. This project will result in a permanent conversion of agricultural lands and was inaccurately characterized as a temporary impact. The 35 year timeline proposed is too long a planning horizon to be considered temporary and will likely result in an extension and the placement of new panels after the useful life of the initial panels for the proposed project. A fact that is recognized in the ISMND which states:

*“While decommissioning and restoration of the site is proposed at the end of its useful life, the conversion could extend from 25 to 35 years or perhaps longer if the facility is repowered. To mitigate for a net loss in agricultural land base and production suitable land or easements could be acquired as provided by the Policy, or, as is proposed by the project, measures will be instituted to ensure ongoing agricultural uses on the property, including but not limited to sheep grazing or the keeping of honey bees, on a rotational basis whereby pasture areas would be occupied for variable periods, allowing pasture rest periods to promote optimal vegetation quality management and maintenance of the project’s pollinator habitat. To ensure the ongoing operations are viable, an Agricultural Management Plan, summarizing the aforementioned agricultural uses on the property, will be submitted subject to the approval of the Humboldt County Planning Director before issuance of a final inspection for the project. In addition, the placement of Financial Assurance with Humboldt County as part of the Decommissioning Plan ensures that the restoration of the project site is funded and there is no permanent loss or conversion of any agricultural lands.”*

The second sentence of this excerpt from the ISMND states that easements could be acquired or mitigation measures instituted that have yet to be identified in an Agricultural Management Plan that has not been developed and is not available for public review. **The uncertainty of the mitigation measures to be put in place constitutes deferred mitigation and is not allowed under CEQA.** The specific mitigations to be put in place to mitigate potential impacts must be identified in advance so they can be analyzed and adhered to as a part of the project. It is also important the design of the project account for the agricultural practices which is left uncertain without the management plan being established in advance.

Mitigation measures should be known in advance and incorporated into the project design. Although there are pilot projects that include sheep grazing for maintenance around solar panels, the spacing, number of panels and type must be considered in advance and described to be able to determine if there is any agricultural value to the site once constructed. Additionally, the remaining land on the project site is to be preserved for agricultural production as stated in the ISMND, then conservation easements should be put in place in advance so that future projects do not result in significant impacts at this site relying on the existing agricultural use to remain and limiting the conversion of agricultural land at this project location.

Mitigation Measure AG-1, the Agriculture Management Plan is too general with no detail and will not ensure the project results in a less than significant impact and would not create a change to surrounding Farmland to non-agriculture uses. Without this plan developed in advance, impacts are considered less than significant in the ISMND cannot be stated with any confidence. Again, the only way to ensure this is that the remaining pasture owned at the proposed site is conserved for agricultural use by the dedication of a conservation easement on the remaining agricultural land to a reputable land trust or conservancy.

4. This site should be considered as having prime agricultural soils as it has the potential for irrigation and meets the carrying capacities required to be considered prime agricultural soils as defined by the NRCS. This site has also been successfully dry farmed to cultivate quinoa over the entire proposed project area. County General Plan Policy AG-P-16 requires the protection of productive agricultural soils, and placing solar panels above these soils will eliminate the use of these soils for agricultural purposes for over 35 years with a likely extension, this conversion should be considered a permanent conversion of agricultural land and a significant impact under CEQA and analyzed in an environmental impact report (EIR). **Photo 4, attached shows a picture of the site when it was cultivated for quinoa.**

The ISMND for the Hatchery Road Solar Project does not even specifically include which mitigation measures are to be incorporated into the project, but defers them to a later time in a yet to be developed Agricultural Management Plan. Deferring mitigation measures, will not allow the environmental review to withstand legal scrutiny if the environmental review is challenged.

The threshold for an EIR is well established. An EIR must be prepared whenever “there is substantial evidence that any aspect of the project, either individually or cumulatively, may cause a significant effect on the environment.” (Guidelines, § 15063, subd. (b)(1); accord Pub. Res. Code, § 21100, subd. (a); § 15002, subd. (f)(1), (2); County Sanitation District No. 2 v. County of Kern(2005) 127 Cal.App.4th 1544.) “May” means a reasonable possibility. (§§ 21082.2, subd. (d); 21100, subd. (a); 21151, subd. (a); League for Protection of Oakland’s Architectural Resources v. City of Oakland (1997) 52 Cal.App.4th 896, 904-905.)

If substantial evidence supports the existence of a fair argument, an EIR must be prepared, even if the record contains substantial evidence to the contrary. (Guidelines, § 15064, subd. (f)(1); Pocket Protectors v. City of Sacramento (2005) 124 Cal.App.4th 903, 930-931; League for Protection of Oakland’s Architectural Resources, supra, 52 Cal.App.4th at pp. 904-905.) In short, if a fair argument is made, “it cannot be overcome by substantial evidence to the contrary.” (Architectural Heritage Assn. v. County of Monterey(2004) 122 Cal.App.4th 1095, 1110.) “Substantial evidence” means “enough relevant information and reasonable inferences from this information that a fair argument can be made to support a conclusion, even though other conclusions might also be reached.” (Guidelines, § 15384, subd. (a).)

The fair argument standard is thus deemed a “low threshold” for the preparation of an EIR. (E.g., Pocket Protectors, supra, 124 Cal.App.4th at p. 928; No Oil, Inc. v. City of Los Angeles (1974) 13 Cal.3d 68, 84.) The “low threshold...reflects a preference for resolving doubts in favor of environmental review” and EIR preparation. (Architectural Heritage Assn., supra, 122 Cal.App.4th at p. 1110.)

In closing I offer the following, I recognize the need for clean energy projects in Humboldt County but not at the expense of our recreational and resource land. Doing so would set a dangerous precedent. The analysis in the ISMND for this project inadequately characterizes the aesthetic impacts with little or no qualitative, quantitative or visual representations of the proposed changes. The proposed project will result in a conversion of agricultural land and defers mitigations to an Agricultural Management Plan to be completed in the future.

This project will likely result in significant impacts and has not been adequately evaluated in accordance with CEQA. It will be a shame to see the degradation of this valuable river and biking location. I urge the County to not adopt the ISMD unless the project proponent can demonstrate

Mr. Dorris  
February 25, 2021  
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that there are no other feasible locations and that mitigation measures are incorporated into the project to protect the environment from the potentially significant aesthetic and agricultural impacts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Merritt Perry". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Merritt" being more prominent than the last name "Perry".

Merritt Perry

Attachment 1 – Photos of Project Area

Cc: John Ford, Humboldt County Director of Planning and Building

**PHOTOS OF PROJECT AREA**



**Photo 1. Ordinary number of vehicles parking to access the river and bike trails at southerly end of Hatchery Road immediately adjacent to, and overlooking proposed project site. This heavily used staging area has a high volume of visitors every year that enjoy the views over the project area.**





**Photo 2. Existing panoramic views at recreational staging area at proposed project entrance near southerly end of westerly end of Hatchery Road. The views are high quality looking at the agricultural fields, riparian gallery forest and expansive views of the Mad River Valley surrounding the City of Blue Lake. The field in the foreground is the project site proposed for coverage with solar panel arrays.**



**Photo 3. Black Tail Deer herds commonly congregate at the proposed solar array location in the spring. Photo taken near proposed project entrance near southerly end of Hatchery Road. Future views would be through chain-link and barbed wire. Wildlife would be excluded from over 60 acres of currently used habitat.**





**Photo 4. Quinoa dry farmed at proposed solar array location demonstrating prime agricultural soils. Photo taken near project entrance near southerly end of Hatchery Road**

**Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Emily Siegel LCSW <emilysiegelcsw@sonic.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 18, 2021 11:44 AM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** Blue Lake Hatchery Road Solar Project

I am writing in support of the Hatchery Road Solar Project.

This project will reduce our dependence on the natural gas fired power plant in King Salmon, reducing Humboldt county's greenhouse gas emissions. It will support the goal of getting the 100% renewable electricity here by 2025, an important goal that I strongly support. I am also impressed that the proposal continues to provide for agricultural use of the land, which is the general plan designation for the parcels involved. Plus the general plan supports using these parcels for renewable electricity installations. I also like that the proposal will not decrease the quality of the environment, reduce fish or wildlife habitat, or threaten plant or animal communities. I hope the developers will consider offering a community benefit such as support for a trail from downtown Blue Lake to the hatchery.

Thank you for considering my comments. —Emily Siegel

## **Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Cathy ChandlerKlein <cathyck@sbcglobal.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 09, 2021 7:38 PM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** Blue Lake Solar

To Planning Commission:

I am a Humboldt County resident who is strongly, completely in support of the proposed Blue Lake solar farm. Climate change is an enormous, urgent threat to the world, and we need to respond quickly and assertively. The small community size of this installation, the number of local homes it will cover, the plan for bee habitat and grazing sheep...clean energy does not get better than this. My understanding is that the developers really tried to find non-ag land and were not able to. I ride my bike in Blue Lake often, and I personally think the solar farm will be lovely to look at as part of the view. I will look at it and think, "we are doing something to save life on this planet!" I understand the close neighbors have concerns, and I appreciate their feelings. But we cannot let "the perfect be the enemy of the good." This is good, and we have no time to waste in regards to climate change. Every community needs to take responsibility to cleanly generate their own electric needs.

This is a good project. Please support it.

Thank you

Cathy Chandler-Klein, MFT  
1070 12th St  
Arcata, CA 95521

## **Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** lala99892@aol.com  
**Sent:** Monday, February 01, 2021 8:01 AM  
**To:** Dorris, Joshua  
**Subject:** Blue Lake Solar Project

To Whom It may Concern:

I'm writing to express opposition of the proposed solar project in Blue Lake.

While I support Solar in concept, the site chosen for this project is inappropriate for the following reasons:

1. The location chosen is zoned AE - Agriculture exclusive. Such land is best suited for food, forage, feed & fiber crops. Conversion to anything else should only be considered if there are no reasonable alternative. In this case, there are feasible alternatives (see next).

2. The local timber industry has been contracting for several decades. As such there is currently infrastructure in place that is not being utilized and companies are currently seeking partners to work with in order to maximize their non timber assets.

Green Diamond, a company in Korbel and adjacent to Blue Lake, and their lessee North Fork Lumber, are actively seeking entities to renting unused property. The property in question is flat, paved, open and properly zoned for such use.

3. The City of Blue Lake has devoted significant time and effort to enhance the recreational opportunities in Blue Lake and surrounding to increase tourism and support economic drivers of success. The loss of open space, glare & noise will derail those efforts. Similarly, the chain-link and barbed wire enclosures proposed will severely impact the visual beauty and detract from enjoyment of the area by residents and visitors.

As a 20+ year resident of Blue Lake who has been involved in many community projects to enhance life in Blue Lake, I strongly urge you to reconsider the location of this project.

Stephanie Dickinson  
707-845-1299

## Dorris, Joshua

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**From:** Susan Ornelas <susieqbean@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 26, 2021 10:18 AM  
**To:** Dorris, Joshua  
**Subject:** Comment of Solar Array on Hatchery Rd.

Dear Joshua, and other County Planners -

RE: Comment of a Planning Dept. project review – the Solar Farm on Hatchery Rd.  
From: Susan Ornelas, private citizen

### Conversion of Agriculture Exclusive Prime Farmland

It is my understanding that there is a plan to install a large solar array on land zoned AE out Hatchery Road. My research shows that this is prime agriculture land, located within 15 miles of 100,000 people. Exploring the soil types and zoning of the site from the USDA maps, soil studies and County General Plan I discovered:

The USDA Soil Survey maps show the soil of this site designated as:

Unit Name	Percent	Soil Designation
Loleta 2 to 5% slope	8.5 %	Prime soil
Fluvents, 0 to 2% slope	0.2 %	Not prime, occasionally floods
Megwil and Cannonball soils, 0 to 5% slope	85.9 %	Prime soil
Lepoil-Candymountain complex 2 to 15% slope	3%	Prime soil
Duzen, 0 to 7% slope	2.5%	undetermined

This makes that parcel > 97% prime agriculture land. Even if these calculations are 10% off due to inaccuracies in an on-line map interpretation – this is prime agricultural soil.

The USDA defines prime farmland as the land best suited to food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops. Prime farmland produces the highest yields with minimal inputs of energy and economic resources, and farming it results in the least damage to the environment. Location can be incorporated in the definition of prime agriculture also - if soils are surrounded by large expanses of undeveloped, productive soils and location characteristics include unique farmland located within expanding urban areas.

The site is zoned AE – Agriculture Exclusive. The Humboldt County General Plan designates AE land with prime soils as critical to the sustainability of the County and says conversion should only occur if there are no feasible alternatives and there is overriding public interest. Besides being productive and accessible, prime soils provide open space, scenic values, and related amenity benefits, important in a planning and zoning context. ‘*No Net Loss*’ of agriculture productivity is called out as a policy in the General Plan.

I redacted a letter I sent earlier, as I was an employee of the City of Blue Lake, and I jumped ahead of the City Council. I retired from the City of Blue Lake yesterday, and thus I submit just the Agriculture Exclusive, and prime farmland sections of my previous letter. I consulted with the County in the early 2000’s, assisting with writing the Agriculture and Natural Resource Section of the General Plan. I was hired as a consultant, worked with Martha Spencer, and was paid by the Switzer Foundation, of whom I am a fellow.

Thank you.

Susan Ornelas

**Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Carol Mone <cemone@reninet.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 21, 2021 5:47 PM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** comment on Hatchery Road Solar Project

Please consider my brief comment on the proposed **Blue Lake Hatchery Road Solar Project**:

I was a fairly early solar adopter; I have photovoltaics on my house in Trinidad. I generally consider solar to be one of the least offensive ways to obtain electricity when compared with the alternatives.

HOWEVER, the alternative we never consider is to cut back usage, but that may not happen unless forced.

So yes, go with this project. It appears to be too little and too late, but better than not doing it.

In a rational world, solar panels would be constructed over parking lots and box stores, homes, schools and libraries. This is where the users of electricity are and the environment was already destroyed when the giant parking lots and their adjacent buildings were constructed. I would not destroy even a cow pasture for these projects. But nature will go on around the infrastructure, most likely in a diminished way, but it will prevail.

So this is my lukewarm endorsement of the project.

Carol Moné  
Box 223  
Trinidad, CA 95570-0223



Thomas Grey  
1354 Hatchery Road  
Arcata, CA 95521  
February 25, 2021

Humboldt County Department of Planning and Building

Comments on Hatchery Road Solar Project Initial Study and Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration

Mr. Ford and Mr. Dorris,

I am writing in response to the Initial Study and Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) prepared for the proposed Hatchery Road solar project (project). The IS/MND does not adequately address issues regarding the project with respect to the decision for the projection site location, conversion of agricultural land to other use, diminished aesthetics and impact to recreation.

### **PROJECT LOCATION**

The site chosen to host the project is zoned as agriculture exclusive (AE) land. The Humboldt County General Plan (general plan) which requires no net loss of agricultural land in AE designated lands unless there are no feasible alternatives and an overriding public interest finding is made. The IS/MND does not demonstrate that other feasible sites were pursued creating a contradiction with the general plan. It was documented, in Michael Avcollie's 2018 master thesis, (Utility-scale solar photovoltaic hosting potential of historic mill sites in Humboldt County, California, Humboldt State University) that Humboldt County has numerous feasible sites to re-use land that has already been degraded by previous land use activities aka brownfields. Avcollie identifies 37 old mill sites that could host 148 mega watts of photo voltaic capacity. In addition to the mill sites studied by Avcollie, the US EPA reported that Humboldt County staff has identified more than 1,500 acres of brownfields. The EPA also has a program called RE-Powering that "encourages renewable energy development on current and formerly contaminated lands, landfills, and mine sites when such development is aligned with the community's vision for the site". It seems that Humboldt County has an adequate quantity of brownfield areas that should be the first priority for proposing an intensive land use project such as a long term solar project.

### **CONVERSION OF AGRICULTURAL LAND**

As stated in the previous section the proposed site location is zoned AE and is, according to USDA soil surveys, prime agricultural soils. The general plan states 'no net loss' to the lands, which the IS/MND attempts to mitigate by proposing the possibility of a conservation easement or having farm grazing on the site, both of which seem inadequate and unnecessary when, as stated in the previous section, there are previously impacted lands available for a project of this caliber. The use of a brownfield would be in accordance with the general plan and would create a positive first step in utilizing these impacted lands in Humboldt County and avoiding a possible precedent setting move of converting prime agriculture land to another use.

It should be noted that in California alone we are losing hundreds of thousands of acres of arable land each year to soil degradation, salinization, erosion, pollution, drought/water restricting measures and urbanization. Due to our particular location, we have an abundance of water which makes our arable

land even more important and have a greater potential to utilize these lands in the future. With imminent sea level rise, Humboldt County is at risk of losing a substantial amount of low lying arable lands and thus should be preserving prime agricultural lands outside of these potentially affected areas.

## **IMPACT TO AESTHETICS AND RECREATION**

The IS/MND does not adequately address the impacts to open space and a highly utilized outdoor area. The project location, at the top of Hatchery Road, is a highly utilized point for a multitude of outdoor activities. I would guess, from my experience of living on Hatchery Road for over 10 years, that 1000's of people use this location each year. The gravel road along the south side of the property is used in the winter by fishermen, in the summer by river recreators and year round by people walking their dogs, jogging, biking, hiking and bird watching. The southern end or top of Hatchery Road is also the entrance to the Hatchery Ridge mountain bike trail system which is used in partnership with Green Diamond Resource Company. This location is also the entrance to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) Mad River Fish Hatchery. The Hatchery is used by people to view and feed hatchery fish, used for education, and used to access the river for fishing and recreation. The Six Rivers Running Club uses the southern end of Hatchery Road as a turn around for its 5k & 10k race. Pedestrians and road bikers also use this location as a part of their outdoor routine. The top of Hatchery road is a publicly accessible vista of the Mad River Valley which is used by 1000's of people and would be a tremendous loss to have a project of this magnitude placed there.

The City of Blue Lake has a vision of improving access to this area of the Mad River from the Hatchery Road Bridge to the end of Hatchery Road. Implementing a project like this is in direct conflict with the vision for this area, for the Mad River Valley and for Humboldt County. It would seem to me that the planning department of Humboldt County should be looking to maintain or improve these areas and vistas and work to improve access to areas like this by improving the road, side walks and safety of this area, not diminish these features. Preserving areas like this are a benefit to our community members and a selling point for tourism.

After several years of reporting safety concerns along Hatchery Road; residents along with County Public Works and the District 3 supervisor, the City of Blue Lake, and Blue Lake residents helped cultivate momentum for serious consideration of potential safety improvements for walking and biking along Hatchery Road from the City of Blue Lake to the CDFW Fish Hatchery. An RTAP application was accepted by Public Works and the County has committed funds and already invested a substantial amount of time and energy to improve recreation and safety in this area. There are preliminary plans for a bike path creating connectivity between the recently built first section of the Annie and Mary trail and the Hatchery recreation area. This route serves not only the local communities but provides increased opportunities for regional recreation enthusiasts to safely enjoy and experience the Mad River, and the increasing number of trail opportunities in this region. The proposed commercial solar project directly conflicts with this longer-term planning vision of a river recreational corridor and the efforts and funds that have already been devoted by the County.

The IS/MND did not provide a photo simulation of what this area may look like after the project is installed. The document described the area to be covered with approximately 13,600 solar panels, a chain link fence with barbed wire on top and additional utility poles with utility wires and transformers. The IS/MND detailed in section 4.0 that there would be no significant impacts to aesthetics and claims

that adding pollinator habitat would actually improve the aesthetics. These claims are not only false but offensive to the people that use this area.

In conclusion, it is apparent that the IS/MND did not adequately address or represent the impact of this project to the area and to the community. This community, including myself, is very much in support of solar and alternative energy projects but this is the wrong location and I would imagine that occupying AE land anywhere in this county is going to be met with resistance. I hope to see this project done properly in the correct location.

Sincerely,

Thomas Grey

February 6, 2021



Planning and Building Department  
Attention: Mr Dorris  
County of Humboldt  
3015 "H" Street  
Eureka, CA 95501

RE: NOITA, A Mitigated Neg. Dec.; HATCHERY ROAD SOLAR PROJECT; Record No. PLN 2020-16320; APN 317-091-19; AND -20

Dear Mr. Dorris:

These comments on the above-referenced project constitute the observations of Joel Canzoneri and Erik Strombeck, residents in the vicinity of the project.

We are generally in support of the findings and conclusions, as mitigated, contained in the Initial Study.

Our comments address Aesthetics, Ag, Lands, and proximity to residences.

**Section 1. Aesthetics:** We believe the proposed project will adversely affect views of the site from a major public roadway. Hatchery Road is a major public roadway supported by the Scenic Element of the County General Plan. Hatchery Road has seen a steady increase in Annual Average Daily traffic counts over the years. When Mad River Fish Hatchery reopens with its handicapped fishing access to the river, and anticipated trails connecting the Arcata Forest area with hills south of the project site, use of Hatchery Road will increase. The views of these agricultural lands from Hatchery Road and the surrounding hillsides will be adversely affected. However, as we review the merits of the project, we believe it is important to analyze the public perception of agricultural lands as open space lands. Distinction should be drawn and incorporated into Section 1 indicating that viewshed rights have not accrued to the public, and considering these ag lands as permanent open space may send the wrong message to the public and owners of ag lands.

The final design of the security fence described in this Section (Page 9 of the initial study) should be included in mitigation measure MM-AG-1, and be subject to Planning Director approval as part of the Agriculture Management Plan. Concertina wire should be specifically prohibited. The security fence will be visible from Hatchery Road, and landscaping of sufficient height to screen the fencing should be required and continuously maintained for the life of the project.

The initial study on Page 19 indicates the solar installation will not be lighted at night.

While this seems unusual, we recommend a condition of approval be incorporated prohibiting exterior lighting especially lighting that could illuminate the night sky.

It is important to point out a relevant sentence in the discussion of Aesthetics, Page 19: "Viewer response may be negative for viewers who place a high value on open space, or positive for viewers who place a high value on renewable energy".

**Section II – Agriculture and Forest Resources:** We concur that prime ag lands will not be permanently converted to non-ag use. The initial study identifies land designated as prime agricultural soils (5.5 acres of Loleta and Duzen soils, Page 20) and State Prime Agricultural lands, which include land capable of an annual capacity equivalent of one animal unit per acre. For the purpose of analysis, the County considered the project has the potential to impact prime ag lands. Underlying soil will not be significantly disturbed (save for piling foundations), and will remain available for ag uses beneath the elevated PV panels. Pages 21 and 43 state continued ag use of the site is contemplated, including but not limited to sheep grazing or the keeping of honey bees. We have concerns regarding establishing unprotected sheep within the security fence. We have first-hand knowledge of two deer-kills in January 2021 in our neighborhood. The appearance of carcasses suggests non-human predators were involved. Unsupervised and unprotected sheep within the enclosure designed to demonstrate continued ag use of the site may actually create an attractive nuisance with increased predator activity on the project site and in our neighborhood. Mitigation Measure MM-AG-1 should discuss this adverse effect and be included in the Agriculture Management Plan. If sheep were intended to keep grass down, the Management Plan should also discuss alternative measures like weed whackers. The use of weed mat to control vegetation under the PV panels should be prohibited as adversely affecting ag soils.

**Section XIII – Noise:** Mitigation Measure III(d) on Page 24 lists nearest residence as approximately 200 feet from the project site. The discussion on Page 45 identifies the nearest residence as 650 from the site. This should be clarified.

The discussion of noise impacts on Page 45 reveals a building is proposed to house inverters. No discussion of the size, height, nor location of such building can be found in the initial study. Specifics related this apparently permanent structure should be included in the project description and listed in Section 3.2.1 of the initial study.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Joel Canzoneri

  
Erik Strombeck

## **Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Katie Strombeck <strombeck.katie@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 25, 2021 5:34 PM  
**To:** Ford, John; Dorris, Joshua; CEQAResponses  
**Subject:** Comments on Hatchery Solar Project

Link for Google Doc version of Letter:

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-YxGqyvg-09kAnwNAmXpMGZy5XjPzzdWZc6b6I\\_2xT0/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-YxGqyvg-09kAnwNAmXpMGZy5XjPzzdWZc6b6I_2xT0/edit?usp=sharing)

### Comments on Hatchery Road Solar Project Mitigated Negative Declaration

Katie Strombeck  
1450 Hatchery Road  
Arcata, CA 95521  
February 25, 2021

Mr. John Ford and Mr. Joshua Dorris  
Humboldt County Planning Department  
3015 H Street  
Eureka, CA 95501

Dear Mr. Ford and Mr. Dorris,

The Mitigated Negative Declaration for the proposed Hatchery Road solar array does not consider environmental factors that are critical to this neighborhood to be significant, when in fact they are. The MND states that noise (page 44), aesthetics (page 18), land use and planning (page 42), recreation (page 47), traffic (page 47) biological resources (pages 24 & 25), and mandatory findings of significance (page 41) are not impacted, or can be mitigated by measures they are implementing. This is not true.

NOISE (page 44): The MND states that the solar array would have some noise from conversion devices, transformers, and cooling fans. It states that there will be a low humming sound. The solar array would significantly impact the seven residential homes that are right next to the proposed field. The homes at the Hatchery are 100 feet away from where the solar panels would be. The noise generated would be louder than the silence that is there now and would impact the residents in those homes. No study was done to determine whether the homes will be impacted or not. A noise study replicating the sound of the machines should be completed to determine if people living 100 feet away will truly be impacted or not.

AESTHETICS (page 18): The MND declared less than significant and no impact on aesthetics. The argument made is that this is not a scenic view. But this location fits the exact description of a scenic view. Quoting the Scenic Resources section of the county General Plan, "a scenic vista is... a public area... providing views of ...agricultural lands" and "provides expansive views of highly valued landscape for the benefit of the general public." The unique, scenic view draws thousands of people who want to enjoy the rural, agricultural setting that Hatchery Road provides. The public greatly benefits from this view. This is an important location for drawing people to Humboldt County to enjoy the view and natural setting. This community cares about preserving the rural character along this road. There is a plan proposed to widen the shoulders of Hatchery Road to provide safer access for the community, and there was a study done to determine what measures would be implemented. Community members stated that striping the road "might not fit the rural character of Hatchery Road." People here care a great deal about keeping the rural aesthetics and not altering it. The sloping hill will not hide solar panels, as is claimed in the MND. Every part of the field can be seen from the top

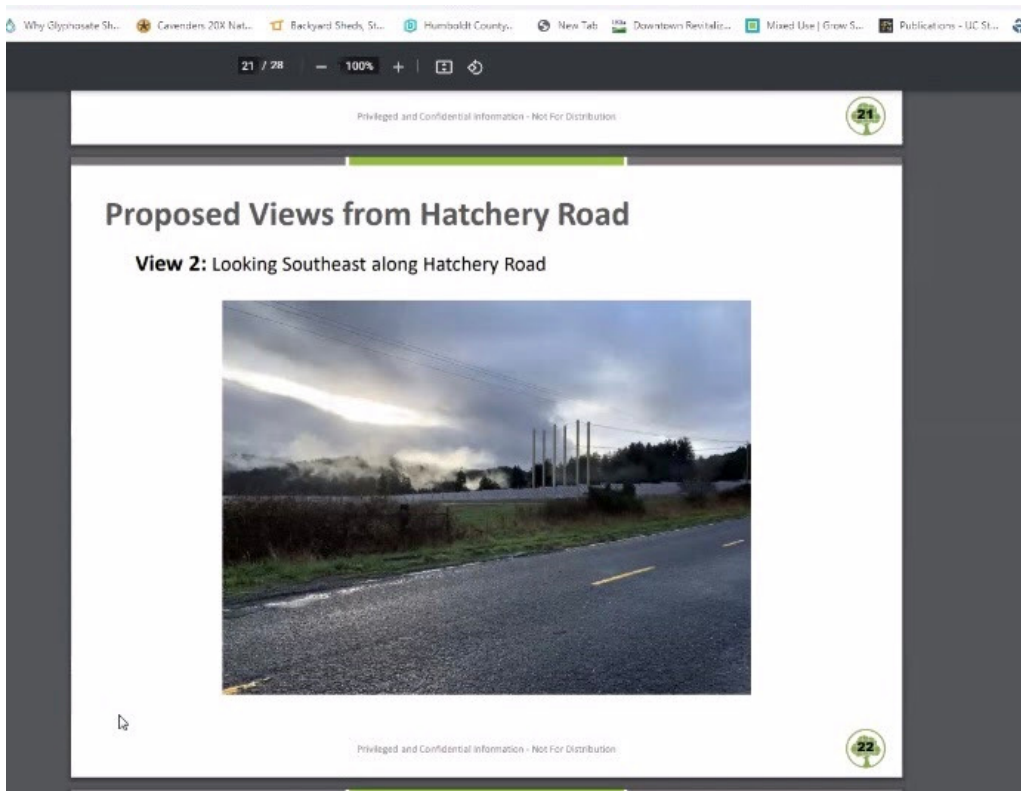


of the hill at the viewpoint. The MND claims that “the solar arrays will create a new visual improvement.” This is not true. Filling 26 acres with 13,664 solar panels, 6 huge telephone poles with electrical wires spanning the field, surrounded by 6 foot chain link fencing with barbed wire on top will significantly impact the aesthetics of the area and damage the view. This would greatly change the landscape, the view, and the aesthetics of the area. It would be shocking to see this industrial plant in the middle of a bucolic agricultural setting, and it would forever alter the rural setting and make it industrial. This would be an eyesore and would significantly impact the quality of life for those who live and recreate here. Those of us who live here moved to this highly sought after area of Humboldt County because it is one of the most impressive representations of rural beauty in all of Humboldt County. Hundreds of people per month come to this road and to the view point at the top of Hatchery road just to see it. Locations such as these should be protected for the good of Humboldt County because it draws people here, makes people want to stay and live in Humboldt County, which improves our economy and keeps us on the map as a destination for rural recreation. Since aesthetics were deemed to not be impacted and no studies were done to show the impact of aesthetics, Renewable Properties, LLC should be required to do a full study on the impact of aesthetics on this area.

Here is the unique scenic view from the top of Hatchery Road:



Here is the proposed image of the solar array, shown from an angle that does not even display how disruptive this will be to the view from the top of Hatchery Road. The 6 foot chain link fencing with barbed wire on top is not shown in this image. This far away, dark image does not accurately represent the plan or show what the true impact will be on the view.



#### LAND USE AND PLANNING (page 42):

This land is zoned Agricultural Exclusive. The General plan policy for Humboldt County is to preserve Agricultural land. This location served as a quinoa farm, so it is productive agricultural soil. In the County General Plan Policy, productive agricultural soils are to be protected. This area meets the requirements for prime agricultural land due to its potential for irrigation and productive agricultural soil. The MND states that there is no net-loss of agricultural land due to installing bee hives and having sheep graze inside the array. Bee-keeping requires a bee-keeper who will care for the hive. No where in the MND are specific plans of how this will be carried out. Keeping bees does not change the fact that the land under it was altered for industrial use. It does not mitigate the impact on land use. Sheep require a shepherd. They require a barn. Sheep will draw in predators, like mountain lions. Mountain lions are known to make an appearance in this neighborhood, and having sheep would be a target for the mountain lions, which would be a danger to this neighborhood. Sheep grazing under and around tightly packed solar panels does not make any sense, as grass needs sun to grow and the solar panels will shade the land under it. Saying that they will put sheep in to graze makes it seem like this land will still be useful for grazing, but that is not the case here, as the solar panels will be covering almost all the land within the fencing. Adding sheep does not mitigate the impact on land use, and is not a well-thought out plan.

At this time, the CEQA document says that this land does not need to be re-zoned industrial because after the 35 years of use, it can be turned back into agricultural use. But, this contract can be extended, and most likely would be. Either way, 35 years is too long a time for the land to not be altered, and this project should not be allowed without re-zoning. There are brown fields across Humboldt County that are exceptional for solar arrays. These sites need to be pursued in depth before using up prime Agricultural land. See study by Michael Avcollie in 2018 for the 37 sites in Humboldt County, and the top 14 sites that are ideal for solar arrays on brown field sites. Here is the study:

<https://digitalcommons.humboldt.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1142&context=etd>. Matthew Marshall at Redwood Coast Energy Authority stated that their goal for Humboldt County is 12 MW of solar power total. The Hatchery location would give them 4 MW on 26 acres. They are looking to use about 50 more acres, for 75 acres total of solar, or 12 MW of power total. The brown field locations provide enough space for 18 MW of solar. These alternative locations were not pursued with any effort whatsoever. In order for a project like this to be considered on agricultural land, all other alternative options must be pursued first.



#### RECREATION and TRAFFIC (page 47):

The City of Blue Lake and the County have been working together to create a safer road for the incredible amount of people who walk, run, and ride on Hatchery Road. The Hatchery Road Walkability Assessment of 2018 states, "The Mad River is a big economic driver for the Blue Lake area. People come to fish, swim, view fish, and park along Hatchery Road to access the river... There is frequent pedestrian and bicycle travel on Hatchery Road as it serves as a walking destination for many Blue Lake residents, a new mountain biking trail system is being built by Redwood Coast Mountain Bike Association on Green Diamond Resource Company property near the fish hatchery, and Hatchery Road to West End Road is an oft-used alternative route to Highway 299 for bicycling to Arcata" (page 2). Here is the study: <https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#inbox?projector=1>  
The mountain biking trail mentioned was built and it draws hundreds of people a month from local areas and from all over the world. It is a destination for mountain bikers.

Following the Walkability Study, The Rural Transportation and Access Partnership (RTAP) put in place a project proposal for widening the shoulders on both sides of Hatchery Road with pedestrian signs due to the huge number of people who recreate along this road and at the end of Hatchery road on a daily basis. These paths between Blue Lake and the Hatchery would provide safe access for runners, cyclists, mountain bikers, families, and fishermen and women.

In the month of January and February 2021, between 30-50 vehicles have been parked along both sides of the road for recreational use every day. In the Spring, Summer, and Fall mountain bikers flock to this location for the trail that Redwood Coast Mountain Bike Association and Green Diamond Resource Company partnered together to create. A great deal of work has been put in to preserve and enhance Hatchery Road as a destination for rural recreation. This road and the land surrounding it, particularly the view point enjoyed by recreators should not be altered for industrial use. The solar array goes in direct opposition to the goals the city and county have for this area to be a destination for rural recreation.

Photos displaying huge amount of traffic for biking and fishing:











**BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES** (pages 24 & 25): The MND states that there is less than significant impact, with mitigation incorporated, on wildlife species. What is required by CEQA for not being a potentially significant impact is that the project will not “interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites” (page 25). On the one day of observation of this site, it was determined that “No evidence of wildlife corridors nor any sensitive species were observed during the field survey” (page 27). This is completely false information. There is a large herd of deer who use this field as a corridor for migration from



the mountains on the west of the field to Mad River for water. They use the field for grazing, raising young, and as a migration route. They have no other way to access the river besides this field. This project will significantly affect the deer population. No study was done to determine the effect on this wildlife species. This lack of study and research of the wildlife that use this field is unacceptable. A study on the impact of the deer population needs to be



done.

MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE (page 41), cumulatively this project will significantly impact the future planned project of increasing recreational use by widening the shoulder on Hatchery Road for pedestrians and cyclists. Cumulatively this project, in conjunction with the past project of the conversion of part the Guynup property to industrial use for gravel and asphalt plant is a significant alteration of agricultural land to industrial type use. No study was done to determine the combined impact of the solar array on this community or the consideration that Guynup agricultural land has already been altered to industrial use for the gravel and asphalt plant, and adding 26 acres of solar to their land as well should be considered in a study.

Using the 26 acres of land at the Hatchery Road location would generate solar power for 1200 homes in Humboldt County. Supporters of this project and RCEA say this needs to be done now to achieve energy independence from fossil fuels in Humboldt County. They say that this land should be sacrificed for the greater good of the county's energy goals. RCEA has an overall goal of powering a total of 3600 homes (needing about 75 acres of land) and this project is the start for them. But, using up agricultural land is not necessary for RCEA's goal to be achieved, when there are 1500 acres of brown field sites in Humboldt County. See study by Michael Avcollie in 2018 for the

<https://digitalcommons.humboldt.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1142&context=etd>

The significant environmental impacts this solar array would have on this area including the noise, the damage to aesthetics and view, misuse of agricultural land, the impact on planned future recreational projects, the negative impact on recreation, traffic and parking, the damage to the deer population, and the findings of significance regarding cumulative impact of this project with past and future projects are not mitigated by grazing sheep and bee hives.

Altering 26 acres of Agricultural Exclusive land to industrial use, taking away the view scape of an area that draws high traffic specifically for enjoying the scenic view and for rural recreation, interrupting the recreational goals for the area, impacting 7 residential homes that are next to the field, taking away deer habitat, and altering agricultural land to industrial use for 35 years and beyond is not worth powering only 1200 homes when there are better alternative locations that have not been explored yet.

Thank you,

Katie Strombeck  
(707) 498-5248

To: Joshua Z. Dorris, Humboldt County Planning and Building Department  
RE: Hatchery Road Solar Project  
Date: February 24, 2021

Hello,

I was in attendance at the information meeting on February 2<sup>nd</sup> (thank you) and I reviewed Initial Study and Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration.

In general, I support a solar project. My initial comments are in relation to two areas that do not seem to be well substantiated in the Initial Study and Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration.

1. Agricultural and Forest Resources—while there is an agricultural plan associated with this evaluation metric, a solar panel project represents *light industry* in an area zoned for agriculture. The agricultural plan, required as a mitigation for this project, assumes that sheep grazing is compatible with solar panel installation. Are there examples where there has been such mixed use—solar projects and grazing? As presented, there are assumptions about co-existence of both without having any tangible information to be consistent with General Plan Policy AG-P6,” incorporation of the proposed agriculture uses, including the pollinator habitat through the implementation of an Agriculture Management Plan will enable a majority of the project site to function as agricultural....”
2. Aesthetics—received a ranking of “less than significant impact” I realize that aesthetics can be in the eye of the beholder but I would contend that the document does not substantiate this determination. Solar panels where there was an agricultural field changes the viewshed of the area. While it could be worse, I realize, is there a way to provide the public with a “simulation” of what this might look like (this was brought up by someone at the information meeting as well)?

While the two comments above would fill in some gaps in the document, I would say my most significant concern is “Why this location?”. From the Initial Study it states:

- Humboldt County General Plan policies are tailored towards limiting the conversion of agricultural land in order to balance economical and generational transitions in local land uses.

While there are certain landscape features that are important for a solar project (note: those features were not identified in the initial study) and the project will provide solar power for Humboldt County, I want to see,

- the extent alternative settings--those already developed--were investigated for this project e.g. mill sites in Humboldt County proximal to existing PGE distribution centers, settings already surrounded by light or heavy industry also proximal to PGE distribution centers,
- the extent alternative settings were considered and reasons why rejected in light of the General Plan’s goal of limiting “conversion of agricultural land”.

Thank you for consideration of my comments.

Lisa D. Hoover ([ldiane@sonic.net](mailto:ldiane@sonic.net), P.O. Box 262 Blue Lake, CA 95525)

## Dorris, Joshua

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**From:** Katie Strombeck <strombeck.katie@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 30, 2021 1:34 PM  
**To:** Dorris, Joshua  
**Subject:** Concern RE Solar Array

Dear Mr. Dorris,

I live on Hatchery Road in Blue Lake near the Hatchery. There is a huge concern with our neighborhood group regarding this project and we are opposed to the solar array project on Hatchery Road.

Right now, this is one of the most beautiful and highly sought-after neighborhoods in Humboldt County. We all moved to this neighborhood specifically for the rural, agricultural, recreational setting. The end of Hatchery Road is a destination for mountain bikers, fishermen and women, runners, and walkers. I walk to the Hatchery many times a week. At the top of Hatchery Road, the view of the farmland below and mountains beyond is breathtaking, and is refreshing to the soul. This is why we love Humboldt County. This is why we stayed here, or why we moved back.

We love living in this neighborhood and enjoying the gorgeous nature around us. But, a solar field would change that for us and our neighbors. It would decrease our quality of life, and for the thousands of people who come to refresh and play here.

A solar field here would be a huge eye-sore. The visual effects of a solar field, chain-link fencing, and barbed wire would make it feel like we live near an industrial park. It would change the landscape of this area and the entire reason we all wanted to live here. And, if it's re-zoned from being agricultural land, what else could be brought in here? Instead of coming to this area and feeling the full effects of why we love Humboldt, we will look out to see 13,664 glass panels glaring back at us, and we will never be ok with it.

This is not the right location for a solar array. This is a residential, agricultural neighborhood, not an industrial/commercial one. There are much better locations in Blue Lake for a solar array. Just across the river in Korb are empty, unused, paved lots that were part of the mill. Humboldt County has many paved lots like this one that could be used for solar arrays. Good design and consideration of the aesthetics of putting in solar arrays must be part of the process, as well as considering the neighborhood. This is not the right place and we don't want it here.

Thank you for your time,

Katie Strombeck

**Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Cathy ChandlerKlein <cathyck@sbcglobal.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 14, 2021 7:29 PM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** Fw: Hatchery Road Solar Project

To Planning Department:

I am a long time Humboldt County resident expressing my full 100% support for the Hatchery Road Solar Project for the following reasons.

- 1.Climate change is an urgent crisis. If we do not as quickly as possible, we will be paying the enormous price in so many ways, locally and globally (forest fires, sea level rise among other impacts).
- 2.Humboldt County has a mandated commitment to reach 100% renewable energy by 2025. That seems realistically impossible but we have to try.
- 3.This project protects the ag land it will sit on with sheep grazing and bee habitat. Seems like a win win.
- 4.Impacts have been assessed as minimal and responsive to mitigation.
- 5.Some locals object to the view of the panels. I personally will be quite moved in a positive way while viewing the solar panels. I will see them and think, "we are saving our planet for my grandchildren! How lovely!"
- 6.Maybe the developer can offer Blue Lake a community benefit like a contribution to the developing trails between town and the Hatchery.

Thank you for your careful deliberation on this matter.

Cathy Chandler-Klein, MFT  
1070 12th St  
Arcata, CA



## Dorris, Joshua

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**From:** Ford, John  
**Sent:** Monday, March 01, 2021 9:12 AM  
**To:** Dorris, Joshua  
**Subject:** FW:



John H. Ford  
Director  
[Planning and Building Department](#)  
707.268.3738

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**From:** Jessica Parker <jessicabrookep2010@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 27, 2021 8:44 AM  
**To:** Ford, John <JFord@co.humboldt.ca.us>  
**Subject:**

To whom it concerns,

I writing on behalf of the solar wanting to go in on Hatchery Road in Blue Lake, California. I live across the street from the projected area for solar panels. I've paid money to enjoy the landscape, the wildlife and the countryside. By putting in a huge solar field you will diminish out country feel, take away habitat for wildlife and cause an eyesore for the people who live here.

Wildlife is abundant out this way, just last week we saw two bucks fighting for the girls and it was something special to see with our children. We are a very rural area and land is expensive out here. We did not pay for there to be a solar panel field across the road from us. We paid for the countryside, the wildlife and the scenery. By putting in a solar track you are taking away from what we moved to get away from. This is fresh ag land...there are many places here in Northern humboldt that would be better suited for a solar field then right smack in the middle of a beautiful place people dream of living.

We have a bunch of open land across the county that doesn't cause an eyesore for the people who live close to it. Find a place that is not on the beaten track and that is more out of the way, and no one needs to see everyday to take away from our paradise...

Thank you,

Jessica Jones  
1550 Hatchery Rd  
Arcata, ca 95521

## Dorris, Joshua

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**From:** Ford, John  
**Sent:** Monday, March 01, 2021 6:49 AM  
**To:** Dorris, Joshua  
**Subject:** FW:



John H. Ford  
Director  
[Planning and Building Department](#)  
707.268.3738

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**From:** Zack Jones <captzackk@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 27, 2021 10:44 AM  
**To:** ceqarespoonses@co.humboldt.ca.us; Ford, John <JFord@co.humboldt.ca.us>  
**Subject:**

I live along Hatchery Road in Blue Lake, California. I live across the street from the projected area for solar panels. I've paid money to enjoy the landscape, the wildlife and the countryside. By putting in a huge solar field you will diminish out country feel, take away habitat for wildlife and cause an eyesore for the people who live here.

Wildlife is abundant out this way, just last week we saw two bucks fighting for the girls and it was something special to see with our children. We are a very rural area and land is expensive out here. We did not pay for there to be a solar panel field across the road from us. We paid for the countryside, the wildlife and the scenery. By putting in a solar track you are taking away from what we moved to get away from. This is fresh ag land...there are many places here in Northern humboldt that would be better suited for a solar field then right smack in the middle of a beautiful place people dream of living.

We have a bunch of open land across the county that doesn't cause an eyesore for the people who live close to it. Find a place that is not on the beaten track and that is more out of the way, and no one needs to see everyday to take away from our paradise...

## Dorris, Joshua

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**From:** CEQAResponses  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 16, 2021 3:35 PM  
**To:** Dorris, Joshua  
**Cc:** Wilson, Ashley; Lippre, Suzanne  
**Subject:** FW: Hatchery Road Solar Project

Hi Joshua,

Please see the below comment on the Hatchery Road Solar Project.

Thank you,

~ Daniela

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**From:** Charles Chamberlin <chambersteins@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 14, 2021 3:18 PM  
**To:** CEQAResponses <CEQAResponses@co.humboldt.ca.us>  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar Project

I am writing in strong support of the Hatchery Road Solar Project. This represents solely my opinion and may not reflect the opinion or positions of my employer.

Charles Chamberlin

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Charles Chamberlin

[chambersteins@gmail.com](mailto:chambersteins@gmail.com)

3285 Alliance Rd, Arcata Ca. 95521

707 832-3807

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## Dorris, Joshua

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**From:** Ford, John  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 16, 2021 5:03 PM  
**To:** Dorris, Joshua  
**Subject:** FW: Hatchery Solar Project



John H. Ford  
Director  
[Planning and Building Department](#)  
707.268.3738

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**From:** Wilson, Mike <Mike.Wilson@co.humboldt.ca.us>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 02, 2021 2:23 PM  
**To:** Thomas Grey <thomasdgrey@gmail.com>  
**Cc:** Ford, John <JFord@co.humboldt.ca.us>  
**Subject:** RE: Hatchery Solar Project

Thomas,

Thank you for this perspective. I have cc:ed Planning Director John Ford so that your comments can be included in the record for the Planning Commission deliberations.

With respect,

**From:** Thomas Grey <[thomasdgrey@gmail.com](mailto:thomasdgrey@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 1, 2021 11:35 PM  
**To:** Wilson, Mike <[Mike.Wilson@co.humboldt.ca.us](mailto:Mike.Wilson@co.humboldt.ca.us)>  
**Cc:** Bass, Virginia <[VBass@co.humboldt.ca.us](mailto:VBass@co.humboldt.ca.us)>; Bohn, Rex <[RBohn@co.humboldt.ca.us](mailto:RBohn@co.humboldt.ca.us)>; Madrone, Steve <[smadrone@co.humboldt.ca.us](mailto:smadrone@co.humboldt.ca.us)>; Bushnell, Michelle <[mbushnell@co.humboldt.ca.us](mailto:mbushnell@co.humboldt.ca.us)>  
**Subject:** Hatchery Solar Project

Mr. Mike Wilson,

I am writing to you in regards to the proposed solar project on Hatchery Road, Guynup property. Since you are a board member of the RCEA I will assume you are familiar with the project and not get lost in the details. The project is not one of pro solar versus anti solar, it is about land use. The land chosen would be converting agriculture exclusive prime farmland which does not seem to fit with the Humboldt County general plan. The choice of this property seems short sighted due to the county having an abundance of abandoned mill sites and potentially contaminated sites. In 2014 it was reported that Humboldt County has more than 1,500 acres of these potential brownfield sites. The EPA has invested 11.4 million dollars to revitalize brownfields in Humboldt County and the EPA has a program called RE-Powering Americas Land initiative which is focused on putting solar and wind power on these brownfields. Michael Avcollie, an RCEA project manager, also

determined in his 2018 thesis that Humboldt County has 1,170 acres of industrial former mill site property which could potentially produce 148 MW of power. With all this potential property it does not seem necessary to convert prime ag land to industrial use. I would hope that you and the other supervisors would encourage RCEA to look for a more suitable location. The last part of this equation is that if the project does go through this will open the door to the conversion of usable agriculture land in Humboldt County, which I'm sure many farmers who work hard would love to cash in on. In closing, know that I am pro-solar but I would like to see it placed on brownfields, industrial areas, rooftops and other already impacted areas, not on undisturbed ag land.

Thank you for your time.

Tom Grey  
1354 Hatchery Road  
Arcata, CA 95521  
707-834-0191

## Dorris, Joshua

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**From:** Ford, John  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 25, 2021 6:16 AM  
**To:** Dorris, Joshua  
**Subject:** FW: In support of Hatchery Road solar array project

John H. Ford

Director

Planning and Building Department

707.268.3738

-----Original Message-----

From: EricaDykehouse <EricaDykehouse@aol.com>  
Sent: Wednesday, February 24, 2021 1:41 PM  
To: Ford, John <JFord@co.humboldt.ca.us>  
Subject: In support of Hatchery Road solar array project

Hello,

I am writing in support of the proposed Hatchery Road solar array project. I have attended both the public information meeting and the city council meeting on the subject and reviewed the materials provided.

I am on the roadway which will be directly impacted by increased construction traffic from this project. I have also enjoyed biking the route and taking in the view which will be altered by this project.

The property owners have elected to utilize their land for this purpose. The land is zoned appropriately for this project. This is how the landowners wish to use their land. The impact to neighbors will be the loss of the gorgeous view they have been privileged to enjoy for many years. The same impact could have occurred had the landowners elected to erect commercial greenhouses instead, or worse, construct commercial sized poultry houses which would have altered the view, added significant noise, and had a terrible odor throughout our town. I have experienced both of those changes as a neighbor to farmland and much prefer a solar farm as an option.

I am in support of this project which will produce clean energy.

Erica Dykehouse  
Blue Lake homeowner and resident.

## Dorris, Joshua

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**From:** Ford, John  
**Sent:** Monday, March 01, 2021 10:36 AM  
**To:** Dorris, Joshua  
**Subject:** FW: Proposed Solar Array in Blue lake



John H. Ford  
Director  
[Planning and Building Department](#)  
707.268.3738

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**From:** Salina Rain <astro@salinarain.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 26, 2021 4:40 PM  
**To:** Ford, John <JFord@co.humboldt.ca.us>  
**Subject:** Proposed Solar Array in Blue lake

To whom it may concern:

I'm a property owner in Blue Lake and am entirely opposed to this installation in our community. There are other more agreeable, workable sites for this plan that would not impact residents directly and alter the character and quality of our small semi-rural community in negative ways.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Salina Rain  
760 Railroad Ave.



## Dorris, Joshua

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**From:** Ford, John  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 25, 2021 6:32 AM  
**To:** Dorris, Joshua  
**Subject:** FW: Solar Array on Hatchery Rd.



John H. Ford  
Director  
[Planning and Building Department](#)  
707.268.3738

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**From:** Susan Moxon <smariemox@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 24, 2021 8:17 AM  
**To:** Ford, John <JFord@co.humboldt.ca.us>  
**Subject:** Solar Array on Hatchery Rd.

Please find an alternative location for the proposed solar array.

The Hatchery Road location is prime agricultural land and should be used as such. At the least it is a rural area that fits in with the beauty of the location. The Mad River and the Fish Hatchery are areas that should be protected from all industrial endeavors.

I live on West End Road just down from Hatchery Road. I feel that the increase in truck traffic would be inappropriate for this recreational area. During fishing season and the summer use of the river there are many cars and people on this road. I can see a potential safety issue here.

Please consider an alternate and more appropriate location.

Thank you.

Susan Moxon  
13901 West End Road  
Arcata, Ca

## Dorris, Joshua

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**From:** Ford, John  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 25, 2021 6:33 AM  
**To:** Dorris, Joshua  
**Subject:** FW: Solar array on Hatchery Road, Blue Lake, CA



John H. Ford  
Director  
[Planning and Building Department](#)  
707.268.3738

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**From:** Bob Filbey <filbey95525@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 24, 2021 8:13 AM  
**To:** Ford, John <JFord@co.humboldt.ca.us>; CEQAResponses <CEQAResponses@co.humboldt.ca.us>  
**Subject:** Solar array on Hatchery Road, Blue Lake, CA

This project is WRONG headed. What does the designation Agricultural EXCLUSIVE mean? Bob Filbey, PO Box 1025, Blue Lake, CA 95525

## Dorris, Joshua

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**From:** Dorris, Joshua  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 24, 2021 1:56 PM  
**To:** Aaron Halimi; Sean Kennings; Stephanie Loucas; Brian Madigan  
**Cc:** Dodd, Jeff; Ford, John  
**Subject:** FW: Solar project in Blue Lake

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**From:** Elaine Benjamin <[bluechairpress@gmail.com](mailto:bluechairpress@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 24, 2021 9:03 AM  
**To:** CEQAResponses <[CEQAResponses@co.humboldt.ca.us](mailto:CEQAResponses@co.humboldt.ca.us)>  
**Subject:** Solar project in Blue Lake

I am all for solar power but installation of the one proposed on Hatchery Road would make a serious impact on our little town. Trucks would go through the very heart of Blue Lake, past the school, and across our new Annie & Mary Trail. That trail has been in the works for many years and it's wonderful now to see dog-walkers and bikers, kids skate-boarding and families pushing strollers.

Have you been to Blue Lake during fishing season? Or during warm weather when the beach beneath the bridge on Hatchery Road is crowded? Cars are lined up along both sides of the road, and people are getting out of them with kids and dogs and picnic baskets or out of trucks with fishing poles. Construction vehicles - and the noise that comes with them - would ruin that and would be really unsafe for those endeavors. I used to work at City Hall and we would get calls from folks in Eureka and McKinleyville during the summer, asking if it was sunny in Blue Lake. They wanted to see some blue sky and warmer temperatures. Our city limits are one square mile - SMALL! This shouldn't mean that we don't matter in the big scheme. I heard a proposal for the solar project to be located in Korbel - That's a much better location and there is access from 299 that could be enhanced for trucks. PLEASE don't subject us to this!

Sincerely,  
Elaine Benjamin  
Blue Lake

## Dorris, Joshua

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**From:** Ford, John  
**Sent:** Monday, March 01, 2021 4:41 PM  
**To:** Dorris, Joshua  
**Subject:** FW: West End Road Solar Array



John H. Ford  
Director  
[Planning and Building Department](#)  
707.268.3738

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**From:** Ann Cottone <AnnC@pacificwatershed.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 25, 2021 7:21 PM  
**To:** Ford, John <JFord@co.humboldt.ca.us>  
**Subject:** West End Road Solar Array

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to you about the proposed solar array project on West End Road in Blue Lake. Though West End Road is not densely populated, it's heavily traversed during many months of the year by folks heading to the Hatchery and the Mad River watershed for a variety of interests, predominately to connect with nature. The last thing they want to view right before their final destination would be this array. One would think a solar array project would be constructed in an area with extremely low traffic, and in addition, one not located in a pristine natural environment. I strongly object to this project being constructed on the proposed site. As a big fan of renewal energy, I support the existence of this project, but please, not on West End Road!! Please contact me if you have questions.

Sincerely,  
Georgia Ann Cottone

## **Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Kit and Rebecca <rzkm@suddenlink.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 02, 2021 4:22 PM  
**To:** Dorris, Joshua  
**Subject:** Hatchery Rd Solar

I am completely in support of the Hatchery Rd. solar project. While it's not perfect using Ag land for solar, the mitigations are adequate and the need to de-carbonize our energy supply is critical and should take precedence over every other concern. We fail to do so at our peril. Please do not allow a handful of NIMBY's derail this important project.

Kit Mann  
139 Applewood Ln  
Blue Lake, CA 95525  
707 834 4892

Jason Crews 2.25

Thank you for your time. I would like to first say that I fully support the use of green energy within the county and I believe we need to be better at decreasing or reliance on fossil fuels. That being said, the proposed Hatchery Road solar array project is not the right site for this project. There are numerous suggested sites that are a more appropriate use for this project. There are also many other areas that are not explored by these developers. Please deny the project location.

The Mitigated Negative Declaration for the proposed Hatchery Road solar array does not consider environmental factors that are critical to this neighborhood to be significant, when in fact they are of critical importance. The MND states that noise (page 44), aesthetics (page 18), land use and planning (page 42), recreation (page 47), traffic (page 47) biological resources (pages 24 & 25), and mandatory findings of significance (page 41) are not impacted, or can be mitigated by the addition of bees and sheep to this property. This is not true.

The solar array would significantly impact the seven residential homes that are right next to the proposed field. The four homes at the Hatchery are within 100 feet away from where the solar panels would be, two of them within 50ft. The noise generated by the inverters would be louder than the silence that is there now and would impact the residents in those homes.

The Massachusetts Clean Energy Center conducted a study of noise and electric-magnetic fields at utility-scale solar facilities running at optimum capacity. It measured the noise that the panels and inverters make at various distances and concluded that, The inverter (or, more specifically, the cooling fan within the inverter), at 30 feet away, the sound is about 65 decibels—or about the equivalent of the sound level of a conversation. The four residences at the Hatchery and the last 3 residences on Hatchery road are within this range.

Section 13.1 of the Humboldt county noise ordinance States:

Noise is primarily a concern with regard to

noise-sensitive uses such as residences, schools, churches, and hospitals. Excessive noise also can adversely affect the quality of life and the rural ambiance that drew it's residents to retire here.

I have had discourse with the Solar project representatives and they cannot guarantee the community that a dull pure tone humm will not be heard at the residences nearby.

The transformers in the solar facility are used to step-up the voltage for easier transmission into the local electrical grid. There are three sources of noise from within the transformer: (1) core noise, (2) coil noise, and (3) fan noise. The core and coil noise are caused by electromagnetic forces which occur two times for every cycle of AC power. Like the inverters, this results in 120 hertz primary sound source, along with harmonics as noted above. The third source of sound is a cooling fan(s) mounted outside the transformer and usually directed across the fins of a heat sink.

Decibels increase on a logarithmic scale, meaning that 20dB is actually 10x louder than 10dB, and 30dB is 100x louder than 10dB. It's at around 90dB that prolonged exposure could result in hearing loss. At the risk of stating the obvious, the decibel level of a given noise source decreases as the distance from it grows—a fact about which few would contest a lack of proof.

This is why, for example, wind turbines, airports, and highways are generally legally required to be a certain distance from homes.

Inverters for larger solar arrays will generate about 60dB at a distance of 33ft. This is approximately equivalent to the amount of noise generated by large air conditioner. The consequences of the constant pure tone hum will be life changing for the residents nearby in this very small quiet valley. Numerous studies have linked noise pollution to increased anxiety, depression, high blood pressure, heart disease, and stroke. Chronic exposure to noise keeps the stress response activated continuously. Eventually, it starts to wear the body down, causing mental and physical health problems.

Another factor of noise that was not addressed is the installation of the Poles that the panels will sit on. Are they going to be vibrated in or pounded in? I have incredibly noise sensitive animals. Driving 13,644 Pyle will kill my animals.

It was stated in the Mitigated Negative Declaration that no wildlife will be affected by this project. That is not true at all. All of the wildlife that use this field for migration will be forced into the residential areas or through the Hatchery. I have a degree in wildlife biology and I have lived here for 14 years. I have watched large herds of deer, coyotes, bear and many other species using this field to get to and from the river from the North mountains. This project will put these animals at great harm by forcing them into the community based on the structure of the watershed below.

In a recent presentation to the city of blue lake, renewable energies purposely left out images of the chain link and barbed wire fences in their visual renderings. They purposely showed two images from angles of least visual impact with panels flat and in their lowest elevation. Images from the main Vista point at the end of Hatchery road was not shown. This is the point of most aesthetic concern. Not once were the row of power poles in the middle of the field mentioned previously. This shows a pattern to deceive the people of blue lake and is not a good quality for a business trying to fit in within the community.

The MND declared no impact on aesthetics and deemed this area to not have a scenic view. But this location fits the exact description of a scenic view. The sloping hill will not hide solar panels, as is claimed in the MND. The MND also claims that "the solar arrays will create a new visual improvement." This is not true. Filling 26 acres with 13,664 solar panels, surrounded by chain link fencing with barbed wire will significantly impact and decrease the aesthetics of the area.

I urge you to deny this project location and give the community time to help them find other locations. Many have been suggested already.



## **Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Merritt Lindgren <merritt111@icloud.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 05, 2021 1:28 PM  
**To:** Dorris, Joshua  
**Subject:** Hatchery Rd Solar Project

I am Merritt Lindgren, a Blue Lake home owner. I'm completely in support of the hatchery rd solar project with a major mitigation request. I park outside of hatchery to walk on the river bar. Now that GDRC has allowed biking trails on there property, there is a parking crisis. Some times cars line both sides of the street for hundreds of feet and also partly in the street where there is no shoulder. Could you please try to include improving the parking at the end of Hatchery Rd.

Sent from my iPhone

## **Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Caroline Isaacs <cisaacs@suddenlink.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 14, 2021 9:33 PM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** Hatchery Rd. Solar Project

To Whom It May Concern:

I am an RCEA 100% renewables customer. Our county desperately needs more local sources that are more reliable and less polluting than our current supply. Blue Lake is a wonderful location for solar energy. I urge you to support this project. It is consistent with the current land uses, and is another important step toward in-county 100% renewable energy.

Thank you for your consideration, and your dedication to making our county thrive.

Sincerely,  
Caroline Isaacs

**Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** jaderiv@humboldt1.com  
**Sent:** Friday, February 26, 2021 4:34 AM  
**To:** CEQAResponses  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar Array

To Whom it May Concern,

As a 38 year resident of Humboldt County I would like to voice my opposition to the location of the proposed commercial solar array on Hatchery Road near Blue Lake. I would very much like to see solar power developed in Humboldt County and support the use of brownfield sites for this purpose. As outlined in the thesis document by Michael Avcollie our county has numerous alternative sites suitable for this purpose. Given that the Hatchery road site is a prime agriculture site as well as the gateway to our hatchery which attracts many visitors it is a terrible choice for the array. I would hate to see this tranquil site transformed by a commercial use for the remainder of my life. 30 years is a long time, would it not be best to locate the array in a place where it could remain and improve the local rather than detract from it?

Sincerely,

Elise Scafani

PO Box 366

Blue Lake Ca, 95525

707-668-5496

**From:** Glen Colwell <gcolwell@sonic.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 15, 2021 12:48 PM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar Project - PLEASE APPROVE THIS PROJECT!

**Subject: Hatchery Road Solar Project - PLEASE APPROVE THIS PROJECT!**

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NUMBER: 2021010092

I am in favor of this project moving forward as a key step in further reducing local carbon emissions and to further reduce reliance on long distance transmission lines which are subject to fire and winter storm damage.

#### **HATCHERY ROAD SOLAR: REASONS TO APPROVE THE PROJECT**

1. We appreciate that Humboldt County is taking the climate crisis seriously. It is a threat that is global but the solutions often come down to local decisions like promoting renewable energy installations.
2. This project will reduce our dependence on the natural gas fired power plant on Humboldt Bay, reducing the county's greenhouse gas emissions. The power the project provides will help mitigate the fact that Humboldt County peak power utilization exceeds the capacity of the transmission lines into the County.
3. It will be a move in the right direction to enable the county to achieve the 100% renewable electricity by 2025 that they have committed to. If approved, the project can be operational by July of this year!
4. The general plan designation for the parcels is agricultural and it specifies that renewable electricity installations are allowed. The property will not be converted out of agricultural. The proposal to use the property for bee habitat and or grazing have been used successfully at other solar installations around the world. The Planning Department document (link above) evaluates use of agricultural land for solar in great detail. The decision to approve this project is clearly based on significant and careful consideration. It should be noted that the underlying land, soil condition, or land use are not changed permanently, as they might be with other land use.
5. Most of the jobs in this project are in the construction phase. It would be an economic benefit to the County if those jobs would go to local, living wage contractors.

6. Some comments have suggested aesthetics is a problem. But aesthetics are time-bound and culturally specific. As the Planning Department document says: “Viewer response may be negative for viewers who place a high value on open space, *or positive for viewers who place a high value on renewable energy*. The limited expanse of the project feature and the limited importance of the affected viewpoints result in the impacts being less than significant.”

7. Under CEQA, possible impacts are significant or not. This project has very few significant impacts and the County agrees that all of them can be mitigated to insignificance. As the Planning Department document summarizes: “The project will not degrade the quality of the environmental, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal. Although no special status species were observed on the project site, potential biological impacts related to special status bird species would be reduced to less than significant levels... In the event archaeological artifacts are found [mitigation measures] would reduce potential impacts to less than significant levels... Therefore, impacts would be considered less than significant with mitigation incorporated.”

8. We suggest to the developers that they consider offering a community benefit. For example, the community wants to put in a trail from downtown Blue Lake out to the hatchery and a financial contribution could make that a reality.

Glen Colwell, (retired Air Quality Program Manager at BAAQMD).

2280 Western Ave

Arcata CA

## Dorris, Joshua

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**From:** April Walton <awalton986@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 01, 2021 9:33 AM  
**To:** Dorris, Joshua  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar Project

Name: April Walton, The following is prepared for public comment.

I wish to voice my opposition to the proposed Hatchery Road Solar Project.

I will state why the Hatchery Road location would create a conflict with the forward development vision of Blue Lake and why the local neighborhood would be harmfully impacted with such a dramatic change to the current rural setting.

A variety of people such as bikers, joggers, walkers, and runners use Hatchery Road. The area of the proposed site of the solar farm currently has a wonderful view of the field landscape and distant hills. This is part of the beauty of the proposed site and surrounding area. That would be totally eliminated with a solar farm and its panels and fences enclosing the entire area. Trying to hide it with trees is no solution as the distant vista would no longer exist. In the past the area was used for grazing cattle and more recently has grown quinoa and fodder for cattle. This area is not suitable for a solar farm that would cover 25 acres of farmland with 13,600 solar panels as we need to keep the integrity of the area intact. The harm caused to the landscape character of the site would be considerable as the solar farm would result in a prominent and alien feature in the surrounding landscape.

The construction phase of the proposed solar farm would cause an unacceptable level of disruption, inconvenience, noise, safety, and disturbance to the City of Blue Lake and the neighborhood that is in close proximity to the proposed site as well as the abundance of people who use Hatchery Road for walking, jogging or biking. The trucks would have to go through Blue Lake and use the road in front of the elementary school and that would create an unsafe and noisy environment for children and those residents affected by the increased truck traffic. People living near the proposed site would not be able to enjoy their property with construction and increased traffic creating a noisy and dusty environment for months and possibly closer to a year or more. That is not acceptable to any homeowner.

**I urge the Planning Commission to deny approval of the proposed site. In order to have a compatible location, a solar farm must be situated where it isn't a disruption and intrusion to local neighborhoods or small cities.**

**Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Carisse Geronimo <carissegeronimo@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 22, 2021 4:11 PM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar Project

Hello,

This message is written in support of the proposed solar project on Hatchery Rd.

Local renewable energy solutions must be pursued if we are to address the climate crisis, and this project has relatively few impacts. Thoughtful efforts regarding mitigation are already in place and incorporation of these strategies would effectively address potential significant impacts in many topic areas. The possibility for ongoing agriculture use and unchanged land use zone are also positive aspects of this project in particular. I support this project and will remain engaged with the process as it moves forward.

Carisse Geronimo  
Arcata Community Member



**Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Cheryl Furman <cause4paws@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 20, 2021 7:55 PM  
**To:** Dorris, Joshua  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar Project

Humboldt County Planning Dept

Re: Hatchery Road Solar Project

To Whom It May Concern,

I would like to voice my support for the Hatchery Road Solar Project in Blue Lake, proposed by Renewable Properties.

I first became aware of this project when the Humboldt County Beekeepers Association (HCBA) was approached by Renewable Properties to explore the possibilities of collaborating with them for an apiary on their proposed site as a part of their effort to be sustainable.

Although in the end it was decided that a collaboration was not in the realm of possibility for HCBA due to the small size and limited membership of our organization, still I was impressed by the priority that Renewable Properties placed on mitigating any ecological impact of their project, and their efforts to explore alternatives that would enhance the use of the property.

Ending reliance on fossil fuels must be a key component of a comprehensive plan to address the looming climate crisis. Further, distributed energy production helps reduce the vulnerability of our society on disasters affecting infrastructure, both deliberate and naturally occurring.

For these reasons, I support this proposed project.

Cheryl Furman

***When you come to a fork in the road...take it.***

## **Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Christi Nash <cdn86@humboldt.edu>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 15, 2021 1:48 AM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar Project

To Whom It May Concern,

Hello. I am a 2019 graduate of HSU's Environmental Science and Management program with a Bachelor of Science. I continue to live in Humboldt county for its natural beauty and sense of community. I intend to make my home here for an indefinite period of time: definitely long-term. I have both an academic and personal citizenship interest in supporting the development of renewable energy sources in the county. I have read over the "Notice Of Intent To Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration" and think a cost-benefit analysis of the Hatchery Road Solar Project strongly outweighs any minor costs in significant benefits. We as a community, and as citizens of the world, have a responsibility to act on climate change quickly and responsibly. I was prompted by 350 Humboldt to contribute a brief letter of my approval and encouragement to the planning department to move forward with the Hatchery Road Solar Project.

Best,

Christi Nash

## Dorris, Joshua

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**From:** Daniel Chandler <dwchndl@suddenlink.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 14, 2021 7:31 PM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar Project

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing to support the Hatchery Road Solar Project.

This is an important project. It is needed to bring resilience to the energy capacities in Humboldt County. It will bring a significant source of local renewable energy to the mix. There may well be times when the PG&E gas-fired plant can be kept off line due to the 4 megawatts of solar the Hatchery Road solar project will provide.

Anything we can to increase capacities for renewable energy are critical since the anticipated wind energy from Terra-Gen did not materialize, biomass is not longer being produced at Fairhaven and Blue Lake, and off shore wind is likely to be 6-9 years before it materializes. The transmission line out of the county does not have the capacity to serve all our needs.

The project is not just needed, it is exemplary. It has very few environmental impacts of significance and they can all be mitigated to a level of non-significance.

The most important question the project raises has to do with whether the use of land that is currently used for cattle grazing is justifiable. The Planning Department's document lays out in great detail why the project does not violate any prohibition on conversion or agricultural or prime agricultural land. In addition the project developers have followed the lead of many other farmers across the country and in other countries who have combined solar arrays with grazing and or housing of pollinators. Finally, the income from renting the land for multiple uses may in itself prevent loss of agricultural land by making it possible for the farmers who lease it to stay in the business.

I attended a meeting sponsored by the Planning Department about the project. Two or three people raised the objection that it would be unsightly. I have a different perspective. I have several times gone to the Indian Wells tennis tournament near Palm Springs. There is a huge windfarm there. Rather than finding it unsightly it both fills me with awe and with a sense of aesthetic rightness because I know it is contributing to the energy transformation this country and the world need to go through in the next 30 years. I expect when I see the Hatchery Road solar array that I will feel similarly that it is a great visual addition to the area.

This is a project that is badly needed and that has no negative impacts that are not mitigated. Please approve it expeditiously.

Thanks you.

Dan Chandler

Daniel Chandler, Ph.D.  
436 Old Wagon Road  
Trinidad, CA 95570  
[dwchndl@suddenlink.net](mailto:dwchndl@suddenlink.net)

Phone: 707 677 3359

## **Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Deborah Dukes <deborahmdukes@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 21, 2021 7:43 PM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar Project

Planning Commissioners:

Please approve the Hatchery Road Solar Project.

I am a member of the Eureka Energy Committee and of 350 Humboldt, but I am writing as a private citizen of Humboldt County. As such, I quite enjoy the sight of solar arrays and wind turbines; I plan to stop and admire the view during my hikes in the area.

We have a very few years to deal with the climate crisis, and it's imperative that Humboldt County does our part as soon as possible. This crisis requires all of us, everywhere, to do what we can to lessen our reliance on fossil fuels.

Please, please do not deny another clean energy project in Humboldt.

Thank you,

Deborah Dukes  
1930 H Street  
Eureka CA 95501  
707-599-6963

## **Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Deborah Dukes <deborahmdukes@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 07, 2021 7:32 PM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar Project

Planning Commissioners:

Please approve the Hatchery Road Solar project.

Humboldt County has committed to 100% clean and renewable electricity, a goal which is becoming increasingly difficult as clean, renewable energy generation projects are denied. Such projects are always going to be in *someone's* backyard, and everyone needs electricity.

I am among those who enjoy the sight of solar and wind turbines. I think with gratitude of the landowners and neighbors who are forward-thinking enough to see clean energy generation as a means to both provide services for Humboldt County, as well as income for their families and communities. I especially appreciate such projects as that proposed for Hatchery Road, where agricultural activities can co-exist with the panels.

Please think in terms of the needs of the entire community.

Thank you,

Deborah Dukes  
1930 H Street  
Eureka CA 95501  
707-599-6963

**Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Fhon <fayehon1@reninet.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 22, 2021 7:18 AM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar Project

Dear Planning Commission,

I urge you to support and move forward with the Hatcher Road Solar Project.

The reasons to do so are limitless.

Thank you,  
Fay Honorof

**Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Jenifer Pace <1jeniferpace@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 19, 2021 3:31 PM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar Project

I fully support this project as an important local effort toward the development of renewable energies.



**Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Fred Tempas <ftempas@suddenlink.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 14, 2021 6:54 PM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road solar project

To Whom It May Concern:

I have read a synopsis of the proposed Hatchery Road solar project and I wholeheartedly support moving forward with this.

Thank you very much.

Fred Tempas  
761 Dorothy Court  
Arcata, CA 95521  
707-822-7917

**Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Jerry Tobe <tagchai@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 15, 2021 4:08 AM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar Project

Dear Humboldt County Planning Commission,

I urge you to take the steps necessary to ensure that the Hatchery Road Solar Project is a success, even though Humboldt county reportedly only has sunshine days approximately half of the year.

Please note that the current ning process addresses two key issues: 1) the District's ageing infrastrucTurHumboldt Municipal Water District plane, since the regional water system is 50 years old; and 2) implications stemming from loss of the District's industrial customer base (since both pulp mills are permanently shuttered). Please also note that "In January 2015 Lucid Energy, the Portland Water Bureau (PWB) and Portland General Electric (PGE) announced that a 200kW LucidPipe™ Power System installed in a PWB water pipeline in Portland, Oregon came online and began generating renewable energy for Portland General Electric (PGE)."

- <https://nwshanew.memberclicks.net/assets/pdx%20ygh%20-%20lucidenergypdxfactsheet-2.pdf>.

More recently, "One of the early proponents of recovering energy from the daily functions of the city is Oregon's InPipe Energy. Reprogramming the City followers will know we've written about them before, and feature them in our book.

InPipe deserves some more attention now, having just launched their new In-PRV (pressure recovery valve) as an integral piece of infrastructure to generate power for the city of Hillsboro, Oregon.

The In-PRV leverages what was once an incredibly inefficient piece of water engineering: reducing the pressure of water as it transferred from the main pipes to residential and commercial buildings."

- <https://reprogrammingthecity.com/recovering-energy-from-infrastructure-using-water-pressure-to-power-a-stadium/>.

Please consider ways to leverage the Humboldt Municipal Water District plan and the plans of other water districts in Humboldt County in addressing Humboldt County's electric power needs.

May you do ONLY that which is truly best for the vast majority of people living in Humboldt County and cause as little harm to those people as humanly possible.

Thank you for reading my messages and prayer.

--

Best Regards,  
Jerry Tobe

## Dorris, Joshua

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**From:** James I Zoellick <james.zoellick@humboldt.edu>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 25, 2021 9:23 PM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar Project

Dear Humboldt County Planning Department,

I am writing to you to express my support for the Hatchery Road Solar Project and to request that you adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration for the project. This project, with the modest mitigations specified in the MND, will not have a significant negative impact on the environment.

In fact, this project will result in a number of positive benefits for our County and for the environment. The project will create local jobs, will provide for increased local energy security and resilience, and will provide a local source of carbon free renewable energy to help meet the needs of RCEA customers in Humboldt County.

In fact, projects like these are necessary if we want to substantially reduce the carbon emissions associated with our local electricity consumption. While it is possible for us to purchase all of our power from carbon free, renewable projects outside the County, thereby contractually eliminating carbon emissions associated with our electricity consumption, this action would not stop the use of natural gas at the Humboldt Bay Generating Station (HBGS). This local power plant must run to meet our local electricity needs. The only way to truly reduce our carbon emissions to zero or close to zero is to develop local renewable energy projects, like the Hatchery Road Solar Project, to meet our local needs and supplant the use of the HBGS.

The Hatchery Road Solar Project makes sense for Humboldt County and for the environment, and should be approved and allowed to move forward.

Thank you for your time. Best regards,

Jim Zoellick  
Principal Energy Research Engineer  
1766 Old Arcata Rd.  
Bayside, CA 95524

**Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Joseph Rand <dzorand@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:59 AM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar Project

Dear Humboldt County Planning Dept.,

I am writing to express strong support for the Hatchery Road Solar Project in Blue Lake. I have reviewed the initial CEQA study and I understand that negative impacts from the project will be minimal and easily mitigated. Positive impacts from the project, on the other hand, will be substantial.

Particularly after the county's decision to reject the monument ridge wind energy project last year, we need to identify, support, and develop low-impact renewable energy projects in the county. Although this solar project is just a small fraction of the proposed wind project's capacity, it is a positive step toward providing more clean, local, renewable electricity for Humboldt residents.

In addition to the electricity and environmental benefits of the project, I anticipate that there will be significant positive local economic development impacts resulting from the project as well.

I urge you to approve this project.

Joe Rand  
Arcata, CA

## Dorris, Joshua

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**From:** Karl Koessel <karl.koessel@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 14, 2021 10:42 PM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar Project

1. We appreciate that Humboldt County is taking the climate crisis seriously. It is a threat that is global but the solutions often come down to local decisions like promoting renewable energy installations.
2. This project will reduce our dependence on the natural gas fired power plant on Humboldt Bay, reducing the county's greenhouse gas emissions. The power the project provides will help mitigate the fact that Humboldt County peak power utilization exceeds the capacity of the transmission lines into the County.
3. It will be a move in the right direction to enable the county to achieve the 100% renewable electricity by 2025 that they have committed to. If approved, the project can be operational by July of this year!
4. The general plan designation for the parcels is agricultural and it specifies that renewable electricity installations are allowed. The property will not be converted out of agricultural. The proposal to use the property for bee habitat and or grazing have been used successfully at other solar installations around the world. The Planning Department document (link above) evaluates use of agricultural land for solar in great detail. The decision to approve this project is clearly based on significant and careful consideration. It should be noted that the underlying land, soil condition, or land use are not changed permanently, as they might be with other land use.
5. Most of the jobs in this project are in the construction phase. It would be an economic benefit to the County if those jobs would go to local, living wage contractors.
6. Some comments have suggested aesthetics is a problem. But aesthetics are time-bound and culturally specific. As the Planning Department document says: "Viewer response may be negative for viewers who place a high value on open space, *or positive for viewers who place a high value on renewable energy*. The limited expanse of the project feature and the limited importance of the affected viewpoints result in the impacts being less than significant."
7. Under CEQA, possible impacts are significant or not. This project has very few significant impacts and the County agrees that all of them can be mitigated to insignificance. As the Planning Department document summarizes: "The project will not degrade the quality of the environmental, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal. Although no special status species were observed on the project site, potential biological impacts related to special status bird species would be reduced to less than significant levels... In the event archaeological artifacts are found [mitigation measures] would reduce potential impacts to less than significant levels... Therefore, impacts would be considered less than significant with mitigation incorporated."
8. We suggest to the developers that they consider offering a community benefit. For example, the community wants to put in a trail from downtown Blue Lake out to the hatchery and a financial contribution could make that a reality.

Thank you for your attention to my opinion. Please work to implement the Hatchery Road Solar Project.

Thanks again,

Karl Koessel

## Dorris, Joshua

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**From:** Kash <kboodjeh@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 05, 2021 2:57 PM  
**To:** Dorris, Joshua  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar project

Dear Planning Commission,

As a Blue Lake resident and Humboldt County Architect, I fully support the proposed Hatchery Road Solar Project and encourage the Humboldt County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors to approve it.  
No project is perfect, but the need to de-carbonize our energy supply is critical to life as we've known it.

thank you

Kash Boodjeh, A.I.A.,  
K. Boodjeh Architects  
P.O. Box 881, Arcata, CA 95518  
531 - 3rd Street, Eureka CA 95501  
707-822-8691 ALT.  
707-798-6107 ext. 211

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## **Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Keith Barnard <k\_barnard@suddenlink.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 05, 2021 3:18 PM  
**To:** Dorris, Joshua  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar Project

Dear Planning Commission,

I am a long time Blue Lake resident who would like to fully support the Hatchery Road Solar Project and would hope that the Planning Commission can unanimously approve it.

As much as I enjoy the natural scenery that surrounds our area, I also enjoy seeing solar arrays, knowing that my town is taking some absolutely essential steps to address climate change, like the Rancheria's microgrid as I'm coming into town. As important as rooftop solar is, it is more important that we establish these large solar (and wind) projects ASAP. I would encourage support for these types of alternative energy projects almost anywhere they are proposed.

Thank you,  
Keith Barnard



**Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Lee Dedini <dedinilee@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 21, 2021 10:39 AM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar Project

Letter of Support

Humboldt County badly needs new local sources of renewable energy. The Hatchery Road Solar Project is a good plan and will provide an additional 4 megawatts of solar energy. This is a move to enable the county towards the 100% renewable electricity by 2025. The project will result in a substantial net decrease in GHG emissions by serving as an alternative source for fossil-fuel based power. It is estimated that the project will result in avoided emissions of 900 MT/yr CO<sub>2</sub>e. Using the EPA equivalency calculator on these avoided emissions would be the reduction of 195 passenger cars driven in one year or 2,200,000 miles driven by a passenger car in one year.

One suggestion to the developers is offering nearby neighbors the benefit of a fixed reduction to their electricity bill for having the solar field in view of their property. Another suggestion, if the community wants to put in a trail from downtown Blue Lake out to the hatchery, then a financial contribution could make that a reality.

Thank you,  
Lee Dedini, Bayside

**Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Marilyn Lang <uncimama@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 25, 2021 4:02 PM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar Project

I write in support of the Hatchery Road Solar Project as a positive step toward providing renewable energy in our local area. That this will not alter the agricultural designation of the property, will allow for much needed bee habitat and not degrade the quality of the environment, will not reduce the habitat for fish and wildlife as well as grazing is a plus as well. My one concern is the possible biological impact on bird species and I hope that any potential problems will be mitigated by careful planning. From all that I have learned, it seems that careful and thoughtful planning has gone into this project.

I hope it will be approved.

Marilyn Lang  
Eureka, CA 95501

**Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Marla Joy <marla\_joy@suddenlink.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 21, 2021 7:34 PM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar Project

Dear Administrators,

I am writing in support of the solar array proposed on the Blue Lake Hatchery Road site. It is scientifically evident that energy efficiency and the need to move away from petroleum and gas energy is a must to reduce carbon emissions and lessen the effects of climate change. I am thrilled that Humboldt County is considering the use of solar energy in this direction. This project is moving in the right direction to have 100% renewable energy by 2025!

Please count my vote as a yes to this project!

Marla Joy

Myrtle town, Eureka, CA

**Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Robbins, Marnin@Parks <Marnin.Robbins@parks.ca.gov>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:00 AM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Cc:** T Griffin  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar Project

Hello,

I am writing to express my support for the Hatchery Rd. solar project near Blue Lake, CA. I am a resident and homeowner in Blue Lake and believe that the project is important to approve in order to increase renewable energy production in Humboldt County. During this time of unprecedented climate change, we must do everything in our power to reduce our reliance on fossil fuel use, and I believe this project is one important step we can take to address the issue. Additionally, far from being a detriment to the landscape/ view shed, I believe a solar farm with mixed agricultural use showcases human ingenuity to find solutions to environmental ills in the face of existential threats to our civilization. The Hatchery Rd. solar farm will be a thing of beauty that we can be proud of.

Finally, I highly encourage the Humboldt County Planning Commission to require that the developer set aside funding for the creation of a pedestrian/ bike trail that leads from Blue Lake to the Hatchery as part of this project. Alternatively, I ask that the planning commission require the developer to invest in facility upgrades to the river access by the Hatchery Rd. Bridge, including a paved parking lot, bathrooms and improved access trail to the river.

Sincerely,

Marnin Robbins  
322 Chartin Rd.  
Blue Lake, CA. 95525

## **Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** marthawalden@suddenlink.net  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 02, 2021 12:12 PM  
**To:** Dorris, Joshua  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road solar project

Hello. I'm very interested in learning more about how the proposed solar project on Hatchery Road would share the land with agricultural activity. I read the first paragraph of the CEQA report, but I can't quite imagine how that works with 13,000+ solar panels on the land. I think it's a great idea, but I'd like to know more. I understand there is information about the project on Facebook, but I don't belong. I'd appreciate it if you could give me more information or steer me towards a good source.

I'm a climate activist, and I write a column for Eco-News.

Thank you.  
Martha Walden

Sent from Windows Mail

**Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** marthawalden@suddenlink.net  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 14, 2021 10:05 PM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road solar project

Though I'm not a Blue Lake resident I would like to express my general approval of this project. The environmental impacts seem small and outweighed by the benefits of the project.

However, I do wonder about the chain link fence topped by barbed wire surrounding the project. Is security the purpose of the fence--as in people might get in there and steal equipment? I wonder if security could be provided without building such an impervious barrier. The report said that no wildlife corridors had been found, but at the preliminary hearing I attended, a resident who lives the closest to that acreage said that wildlife commonly crossed that area on their way to the river. I suppose they can go around, but allowing traffic through there would seem optimum if it doesn't cause a problem.

I would also like to express the hope that "vegetation control" would not entail any herbicides. I really like the idea of the panels sharing the land with grazing animals; however, I'd imagine that the landowner would be in charge of that. If grazing doesn't control the vegetation, what means would the project managers use?

Martha Walden

Sent from Windows Mail

**From:** M Tripp <recn@sbcglobal.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 15, 2021 8:13 AM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar Project

Hello there.

I am writing to support this project. I live in Los Angeles County and it has become clear that the state as a whole is moving too slowly to meet it's 100% clean energy commitment by 2045. There's a lack of understanding that it takes a long time to build infrastructure. With that in mind, I'm in full support of this and all other projects that help us achieve greater independence from fossil fuels and other polluting energy sources. Let's get this project approved for all of the reasons which follow:

### **HATCHERY ROAD SOLAR: REASONS TO APPROVE THE PROJECT**

1. We appreciate that Humboldt County is taking the climate crisis seriously. It is a threat that is global but the solutions often come down to local decisions like promoting renewable energy installations.
2. This project will reduce our dependence on the natural gas fired power plant on Humboldt Bay, reducing the county's greenhouse gas emissions. The power the project provides will help mitigate the fact that Humboldt County peak power utilization exceeds the capacity of the transmission lines into the County.
3. It will be a move in the right direction to enable the county to achieve the 100% renewable electricity by 2025 that they have committed to. If approved, the project can be operational by July of this year!
4. The general plan designation for the parcels is agricultural and it specifies that renewable electricity installations are allowed. The property will not be converted out of agricultural. The proposal to use the property for bee habitat and or grazing have been used successfully at other solar installations around the world. The Planning Department document ([link](#)) evaluates use of agricultural land for solar in great detail. The decision to approve this project is clearly based on significant and careful consideration. It should be noted that the underlying land, soil condition, or land use are not changed permanently, as they might be with other land use.
5. Most of the jobs in this project are in the construction phase. It would be an economic benefit to the County if those jobs would go to local, living wage contractors.
6. Some comments have suggested aesthetics is a problem. But aesthetics are time-bound and culturally specific. As the Planning Department document says: "Viewer response may be negative for viewers who place a high value on open space, *or positive for viewers who place a high value on renewable energy*. The limited expanse of the project feature and the limited importance of the affected viewpoints result in the impacts being less than significant."

7. Under CEQA, possible impacts are significant or not. This project has very few significant impacts and the County agrees that all of them can be mitigated to insignificance. As the Planning Department document summarizes: “The project will not degrade the quality of the environmental, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal. Although no special status species were observed on the project site, potential biological impacts related to special status bird species would be reduced to less than significant levels... In the event archaeological artifacts are found [mitigation measures] would reduce potential impacts to less than significant levels... Therefore, impacts would be considered less than significant with mitigation incorporated.”

8. We suggest to the developers that they consider offering a community benefit. For example, the community wants to put in a trail from downtown Blue Lake out to the hatchery and a financial contribution could make that a reality.

Best regards,  
Martin Tripp



## Dorris, Joshua

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**From:** Mary Sanger <marysanger.001@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 25, 2021 2:04 PM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar Project

Commissioners

My name is Mary Sanger and I am a resident of Humboldt County. I'm writing to you today to voice my support for the Hatchery Road Solar Project.

The reality of global warming is no longer in question. We need to move on to solutions: replacing the burning of fossil fuels with renewables like solar and wind. Indeed, in order to achieve Humboldt Counties ambitious goal of 100% renewable electricity by 2025, we need to install more rooftop solar, micro grids, utility grade solar and offshore wind. While the project in question is small and doesn't include storage ,it is a step in the right direction.

The project is consistent with the Counties General Plan and doesn't require a zoning change. In fact, it can remain as an agricultural asset by using the land around the panels for sheep grazing. Also, the project developers are willing to maintain bee habitat using native plants. This is definitely win-win!

Neighbors of the project lament that it would cause a loss of esthetic value. From the description of the project this should be minimal as all the structures would be 8ft. Tall. However, maybe a community benefit could be extended in the form of a donation to help pay for a downtown Blue lake to the hatchery trail that they have wanted to construct for some time.

Thank you for your consideration! Sincerely, Mary Sanger

**Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Kenzie Mullen <kenzieroxxie@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 22, 2021 6:57 AM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar Project

Hello Planning Department

I would like for you to support the plan for a solar array to be built in Blue Lake. Humboldt needs to have more renewable energy resources. As a resident of Humboldt I urge you to do this. We ourselves have solar on our house and enjoy getting our electricity from the ☀️ sun and feel good about not contributing to CO2.  
Thank you for your consideration.

Mike and Kenzie Mullen  
1329 Bay St, Eureka, CA 95501

--

Kenzie

"Want to shine a light in dark times? [Sign up for the Americans of Conscience Checklist.](#)"

**Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Nancy Ihara <nancyihara@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 14, 2021 7:38 PM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar Project

Planning Commissioners,

I am so pleased that there is a plan to install solar arrays in Blue Lake. We all are aware that we need to transition to clean energy as quickly as possible and this is a step in the right direction. It is great to have found a location where the land can be used to produce electricity while simultaneously maintaining its agricultural capabilities.

I have heard arguments that we should be focused on installing solar panels on houses. Statistics presented during the Terra Gen debate by Jay Peltz indicated that doing so would be nearly three times more expensive than utility scale solar projects.

Aesthetically I agree with those for whom the sight of solar panels is a positive and encouraging sight.

I urge you to support this project.

Nancy R. Ihara

**Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Richard Engel <chard\_e@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 24, 2021 9:39 PM  
**To:** CEQAResponses  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar Project

Dear Humboldt County Planning Commissioners and Planning Department Staff,

I am writing in support of the proposed Hatchery Road Solar Project. This project will help increase the portion of Humboldt County's electricity from renewable sources while reducing local greenhouse gas emissions. The "initial study and proposed mitigated negative declaration" document prepared for the project demonstrates that the impacts associated with the project will be minimal and reasonably straightforward to mitigate. Based on the information in that document, this is a compatible use for this site. I hope that the Planning Commission will choose to allow this project to move forward.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,  
Richard Engel  
Arcata, CA

## Dorris, Joshua

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**From:** Robert Chapman <rochapman@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 05, 2021 3:26 PM  
**To:** Dorris, Joshua  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar Project

Dear Planning Commission,

As a ten-year Blue Lake resident, a forty-five year Humboldt County resident, a frequent recreational user of our area, and a consumer of energy, I wholeheartedly support the proposed Hatchery Road Solar Project and encourage the Humboldt County Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners to unanimously approve it.

Some people are concerned that installing solar panels will cause a visual blight and diminish their ability to enjoy a natural environment. This neglects to recognize that this is not natural land we are dealing with for this project. It is agricultural land and it is bordered by land used by the gravel industry and an industrial fish hatchery. If I were to see solar panels on my way to the Hatchery Ridge trails or to my favorite swimming holes on the Mad River, I would be filled with joy, knowing my community is taking meaningful steps to produce energy locally, utilize green energy, move away from fossil fuels, and address the very real issue of climate change - something that really will have a negative impact not only on the natural environment, but also on the health and well-being of all of us. I put ten solar panels on my house here in Blue Lake and see the Hatchery Road Solar Project as a continuation of that kind of responsible citizenship.

Another criticism of the Hatchery Road Solar Project is that there are better locations, such as a nearby mill site. However, it takes more than a hypothetical site to develop a project - there must also be a willing landowner. The Hatchery Road Solar Project has a willing landowner, who is no longer interested in using that land exclusively for agriculture, the land is compatible for solar energy development, and has the support of most of the residents of this area. The use of industrial sites for green energy is a good idea, but I do not think that should affect a project already in development, especially one bordering gravel mining and production and an industrial fish hatchery.

Thank you,

Bob Chapman

Robert Chapman  
720 4th Ave. #1201  
Blue Lake, CA 95525  
707-834-1180  
rochapman@gmail.com

Sent from my iPad

## **Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Ron Sharp <orderwithinron@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 05, 2021 2:33 PM  
**To:** Dorris, Joshua  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar Project

Hello,

I am in favor of the Hatchery Road Solar Project in Blue Lake. This is a good step towards manifesting clean energy and I am happy to see this unfold in our community.

Sincerely,

Ron Sharp  
230 H Street  
Blue Lake, Ca 95525

**Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Rudy and Vicky <rampturn@tidepool.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 15, 2021 10:28 AM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** HATCHERY ROAD SOLAR PROJECT

Hello County Planning Commissioners,

Humboldt County badly needs new local sources of renewable energy to enable the county to achieve its goal of having 100% renewable electricity by 2025 and the proposed Hatchery Road Solar Project in Blue Lake will contribute to meeting some of that need. I understand that, If you approve the project, it can be operational by July of this year. Therefore, I strongly urge you to approve this project when it next appears on your meeting agenda.

Sincerely,  
Rudy Ramp  
370A California Ave.  
Arcata, CA 95521

## **Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Stephen Kullmann <swkullmann@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 24, 2021 11:12 AM  
**To:** CEQAResponses  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar Project

Dear Planning Commission,

As a Blue Lake resident and frequent recreational user the area, I wholeheartedly support the proposed Hatchery Road Solar Project and encourage the Humboldt County Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners to unanimously approve it.

Solar panels are not invisible. They are a human-made addition to the landscape. So are barns, fences, recreational trails, and even cows. Some people are concerned that installing solar panels will cause a visual blight and diminish their ability to enjoy a so-called pristine natural environment of which these other human-made additions are an integral part. If I were to see solar panels on my way to mountain bike the Hatchery Ridge trails or to my favorite swimming holes on the Mad River, I would imagine myself filled with pride that my community is taking meaningful steps to address the very real issue of climate change-- something that really will have a negative impact not only on the natural environment, but also the health and well-being of all of us.

Another criticism of the Hatchery Ridge Solar Project is that there are better locations, such as unused mill sites. As we all know, it takes more than a hypothetical site to develop a project. There must also be a willing landowner. I encourage incentivizing solar and other development on legacy industrial sites, but not at the expense of a project already in development.

Thank you,

Stephen Kullmann

Blue Lake,, CA



Humboldt County Planning Dept

Attn: [JDorris@co.humboldt.ca.us](mailto:JDorris@co.humboldt.ca.us)

Re: Hatchery Road Solar Project

Dear Sir or Madame;

I would like to voice my support for the Hatchery Road Solar Project in Blue Lake, proposed by Renewable Properties.

I became aware of this project when the Humboldt County Beekeepers Association (HCBA) was approached by Renewable Properties to explore the possibilities of collaborating with them for an apiary on their proposed site as a part of their development.

Although in the end we decided that a collaboration was not in the realm of possibility for HCBA due to the small size and limited membership of our organization, still I was impressed by the priority that Renewable Properties placed on mitigating any ecological impact of their project, and their efforts to explore alternatives that would enhance the use of the property.

Ending reliance on fossil fuels must be a key component of a comprehensive plan to address the looming climate crisis. Further, distributed energy production helps reduce the vulnerability of our society on disasters affecting infrastructure, both deliberate and naturally occurring.

For these reasons, I support this proposed project.

Tim Talbert

390 Dick Smith Rd

Fortuna, CA 95540

Tjtalbert@gmail.com

February 24, 2021

RE: Hatchery Road Solar Project

Dear Planning Commissioners,

In general, I support development of micro grid solar projects in Humboldt County.

The inclusion of batteries in this project would supply energy in the evening during the highest demand period. This would be a more effective offset of energy from the PG&E gas power plant and much less expensive than paying for biomass energy. I urge the Planning Commission to require batteries as part of this project to be completed within a reasonably short time period.

The project life span is 35 years. Prior to 2056, Humboldt County may lose a significant amount of prime agricultural land due to rising water tables related to sea level rise and/or direct flooding from levee failure. If for some reason related to climate change Humboldt County is in dire need of prime agricultural land for local food crop production, we would benefit from language in the contract that would allow decommissioning prior to 2056 to meet a critical local food production need.

An HSU graduate student identified abandoned mill sites that were suitable for solar micro grid development, *Utility-scale Solar Photovoltaic Hosting Potential of Historic Mill Sites in Humboldt County, California*. MS Thesis, May, 2018. Did the applicant contact any of the owners of these sites? I urge the Planning Department to utilize this resource with future solar micro grid applicants.

Thank you.

Diane Ryerson  
1659 I Street  
Arcata, CA 95521

## Dorris, Joshua

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**From:** wring123@gmail.com  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 14, 2021 9:22 PM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar Project

I support the Hatchery Road Solar Project. If Humboldt County is to meet its goal of 100% renewable energy by 2025, we must develop local renewable electricity. There will always be some neighbors who protest, but we can't allow NIMBYism to shoot down our renewable future. The stakes are too high.

Our current conception of environmental impact measures the impact of a proposed project compared with continuing current land use and conditions, but that is not the reality that we face. We need to compare the impact of clean energy projects with the climate impacts of doing nothing. Our county is already feeling the effects of wildfires. Algae blooms from ocean warming have hurt our fishermen and made crab for Christmas a thing of the past. We have the fastest sea level rise on the Pacific coast. It's projected that in 10-20 years, highway 101 will be inundated by high tides. A solar farm is reversible. Climate change is not. Aesthetically, to me, solar panels are not ugly. They are a symbol of hope.

Offshore wind is not a certain thing, and putting solar panels on every rooftop would not meet all of Humboldt's energy needs. Rooftop solar is also 3 times more expensive per installed watt than solar farms.

Agriculture can co-exist with solar farms, and not just flower for pollinators and grazing. Research from around the US is showing that some row crops can thrive under solar panels.

Wendy Ring

*Get inspired by communities taking climate action  
with [Cool Solutions Radio and Podcast](#)*

**Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** cminton65 <cminton99@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 26, 2021 10:14 AM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar Project.

We definitely support the four panels off Hatchery Road.

Would like to see more of this as a step towards helping our environment.

Also dealing with the seriously big increases in PG&E electric bills.

Charles Minton & Jessica Salant

## Dorris, Joshua

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**From:** O'connell, Gregory@Wildlife <Gregory.OConnell@Wildlife.ca.gov>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 26, 2021 8:34 AM  
**To:** Dorris, Joshua  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar Project; SCH# 2021010092

Good morning Joshua. CDFW will not be submitting a formal comment letter to the state clearinghouse for the Hatchery Road Solar Project IS/MND (SCH# [2021010092](#)) by today's deadline, but I'd like to offer an informal comment. Please consider a condition of approval that power delivery lines from the solar arrays to existing distribution lines be conveyed underground withing existing roadways or other alignments with minimal impact to natural habitats.

Thanks,

Greg O'Connell  
Environmental Scientist  
Coastal Conservation Planning  
California Department of Fish and Wildlife  
619 Second Street  
Eureka, CA 95501  
Gregory.OConnell@Wildlife.ca.gov

## **Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Patrick Carr <nedlud432@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 26, 2021 6:38 AM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road/Blue Lake Solar Project

Hello Commissioners,

I have reviewed the IS/MND and attended the informational meeting several weeks ago conducted by Director Ford. I support the development of this project as proposed. I believe its impacts to be minimal and the development would be within the range of its current zoning. In fact, as proposed by the developer, the project will likely also continue to keep the agricultural use it has supported.

Humboldt County and the world at large badly need renewable energy -- without its prompt development the impacts on this parcel will be far greater. This project would be a small but necessary step toward a far more benign future than is otherwise looming.

Thanks for your consideration!

Patrick Carr  
1704 Virginia Way  
Arcata CA 95521

## **Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Mad River <friendsofthemadriver@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 17, 2021 1:40 PM  
**To:** Planning Clerk; greg.oconnell@wildlife.ca.gov; Dorris, Joshua; Michael van Hattem  
**Subject:** Humboldt County PLN-2020-16320 Hatchery Road Solar Farm

Comments on Humboldt County planning project #PLN-2020-16320, please include these comments into the official record for this project.

Please review the mapping of the Streamside Management Area on the site plan for this project. It is not accurate at all because the county's GIS mapping is very inaccurate, and the developer did not correctly apply the Humboldt County Streamside Management Area Ordinance. The ordinance dictates that Streamside Management Areas shall be wider than the active river channel, especially in floodplains and must encompass the full extent of associated riparian vegetation.

For the proposed solar farm on Hatchery Road, the eastern edge of the project parcel actually touches the edge of the riparian forest that is associated with the Mad River and its significant floodplain forest. Several very large cottonwoods and many willows and other riparian trees are located on the eastern edge of the project parcel. Therefore, according to the Humboldt County Streamside Management Area Ordinance, there should be a 100 foot buffer at minimum from the edge of the riparian forest that currently extends to the property boundary. That means no structures shall be placed within that 100 foot buffer, without an express written sign off by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Cc'd to this email), and a publicly reviewable statement of reasons for decreasing or eliminating the Streamside Management Area buffer.

Finally, the riparian forest in this area has consistently documented breeding Willow Flycatchers, a species that is listed under the California Endangered Species Act. Please refer to publicly available data on eBird (eBird.org) from reputable local biologists. Therefore, any reduction in the Streamside Management Area should fully analyze the potential impact to Willow Flycatchers and their habitat.

Respectfully submitted,

- Friends of the Mad River

**Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** April Walton <awalton986@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 25, 2021 12:56 PM  
**To:** CEQAResponses  
**Subject:** Proposed Solar Array on Hatchery Road

I have lived near Blue Lake and the proposed solar farm site for 30 years. This area is known for its rural bucolic atmosphere. Locals as well as people come from outlying communities frequent Hatchery Road to bike, run, walk, jog and enjoy the vistas and abundance of birds and their songs. If there would be a large solar farm at the top of Hatchery Road it would totally eliminate the view of the distant mountains which needs to be preserved. The landscape and viewscape would be blocked by a 7 or 8 ft fence with barbed wire on top. Planting trees or bushes to mitigate the fencing is not a solution as it would create an alien presence which would block the natural open landscape beauty.

The proposed land is prime agricultural farmland and has been used for over 30 years to graze cattle, grow fodder for silage and recently has been used to grow quinoa. The acreage should not be a site for a solar farm when there are other brownfield sites that would be much more appropriate. The integrity of the Hatchery Road area has no place for the introduction of such an alien presence as a solar farm. I ask that the Planning Commission find a more suitable site so that the landscape, viewscape and Hatchery Road remains a destination of outdoor enthusiasts.

Respectfully Submitted,  
April Walton



## Dorris, Joshua

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**From:** lala99892@aol.com  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 10, 2021 1:04 PM  
**To:** Dorris, Joshua  
**Subject:** Re: Blue Lake Solar Project

Good afternoon:

After speaking at length with Brian Madigan today, I feel even more strongly that the location of this solar project in completely inappropriate.

1. The proposal of sheep grazing and bee keeping is not sufficient to mitigate the issues of inappropriate use of agriculture land as they will likely not be year round and are not being included as part of the project contracts - they are conceptual in nature only.

2. The visual blight of an industrial chain link fence and barbed wire on a heavily used recreational area is clearly to benefit the investors in this project only. Humboldt County officials should take the position that the needs of Humboldt county residents and tax payers are primary. At a minimum, a less visually intrusive fence should be a condition of approval. See this link below for example:

<http://www.landpowersolar.com/Solar-Farm-Fencing.html?Solar-Roof-Mount=2&Solar-Ground-Mount=152>

3. There is an abundance of mothballed industrial sites in Humboldt County that could be repurposed for this project. Additionally, there are sites in interior and south county of Humboldt which receive significantly more solar exposure and are not located close to recreational areas or small towns.

Again I urge you to consider the needs and desires of the local populace as more important than lining the pockets of out of area corporate investors.

Stephanie Dickinson

-----Original Message-----

From: lala99892@aol.com  
To: jdorris@co.humboldt.ca.us <jddorris@co.humboldt.ca.us>  
Sent: Mon, Feb 1, 2021 8:00 am  
Subject: Blue Lake Solar Project

To Whom It may Concern:

I'm writing to express opposition of the proposed solar project in Blue Lake.

While I support Solar in concept, the site chosen for this project is inappropriate for the following reasons:

1. The location chosen is zoned AE - Agriculture exclusive. Such land is best suited for food, forage, feed & fiber crops. Conversion to anything else should only be considered if there are no reasonable alternative. In this case, there are feasible alternatives (see next).

2. The local timber industry has been contracting for several decades. As such there is currently infrastructure in place that is not being utilized and companies are currently seeking partners to work with in order to maximize their non timber assets.

Green Diamond, a company in Korbel and adjacent to Blue Lake, and their lessee North Fork Lumber, are actively seeking entities to renting unused property. The property in question is flat, paved, open and properly zoned for such use.

3. The City of Blue Lake has devoted significant time and effort to enhance the recreational opportunities in Blue Lake and surrounding to increase tourism and support economic drivers of success. The loss of open space, glare & noise will derail those efforts. Similarly, the chain-link and barbed wire enclosures proposed will severely impact the visual beauty and detract from enjoyment of the area by residents and visitors.

As a 20+ year resident of Blue Lake who has been involved in many community projects to enhance life in Blue Lake, I strongly urge you to reconsider the location of this project.

Stephanie Dickinson  
707-845-1299

## Dorris, Joshua

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**From:** Dorris, Joshua  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 01, 2020 4:15 PM  
**To:** Thomas Grey  
**Cc:** Werner, Steve  
**Subject:** RE: Hatchery Road Solar Farm

Hi Tom,

Thanks for your email. Responses to your inquiries are in blue.

Please let me know if you have additional questions.

Thanks,  
Joshua

**From:** Thomas Grey <thomasdgrey@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 31, 2020 09:50  
**To:** Dorris, Joshua <JDorris@co.humboldt.ca.us>  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar Farm

Hi Joshua,

I have been following the Hatchery Solar Farm project and thinking that the county wasn't going to allow the loss of prime Ag land to happen. But it looks like the county is going to approve the project, does that seem like an accurate observation?

The Planning Department is analyzing the proposal for consistency with the zoning and general plan policies and will make a recommendation to the Planning Commission (PC) by way of a staff report. There will then be a noticed public hearing before the PC who will approve, continue or deny the project. The zoning and general plan both have a "no-net-loss" agricultural lands policy. Any conversion of agricultural lands to non-agricultural uses requires findings to be made by the PC and includes specific mitigation measures to offset the conversion. We are working with the project applicant to identify potential mitigations, as this is the first project proposing conversion since the policies were adopted in 2017. It is speculation at this juncture to presume that the project will be approved.

The neighbors had talked of sending a letter in but never got around to it, would I send that to you?

Yes, please submit comments to me.

Is a CEQA document being prepared and when and how do we comment to that?

Yes, a CEQA Environmental Initial Study/proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) is being prepared. The MND will be published to the State Clearinghouse (<https://opr.ca.gov/clearinghouse/ceqa/>) and made available for a thirty-day public review and comment period. Depending on comments received, the MND will either be amended to address newly identified substantive issues and then recirculated for another thirty-days, or the MND will go before the PC for adoption as part of the public hearing process for the project.

Are there any other ways that I don't know about to our voice heard about the project?

You are on the project notification list and will receive notice that the MND is available for review. When the proposal gets scheduled for the PC, you will receive notice of the public hearing as you live within 300' of the project site. We will accept comments on the project up to the day of the public hearing.

Thanks

Tom Grey

## Dorris, Joshua

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**From:** Dorris, Joshua  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:35 AM  
**To:** Walter Paniak  
**Subject:** RE: Hatchery road solar project

Hi Walt,

The project proposes to allow continued grazing by sheep near the solar arrays.

Following is the link to the CEQA documents which describes the project in detail:

<https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/2021010092/3>

Let me know if you have additional questions.

Thanks,  
Joshua

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**From:** Walter Paniak <wpaniak@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 02, 2021 09:37  
**To:** Dorris, Joshua <JDorris@co.humboldt.ca.us>  
**Subject:** Hatchery road solar project

Will the solar panels be installed high enough to allow periodic grazing under the panels? Or is the grazing component in the space between the panels?

Walt Paniak

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Walt Paniak

## Dorris, Joshua

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**From:** Sunthurst Energy <daniel@sunthurstenergy.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 12, 2021 9:58 AM  
**To:** Dorris, Joshua  
**Cc:** Lazar, Steve  
**Subject:** RE: Hatchery Road Solar Project SCH #2021010092

Hi Joshua,

Thanks for the follow up and information.

Is there a link to the MND to locate? I looked up the project on ACCLA but not see this filing posted.

Hatchery Road Solar Project is on Unclassified Zoned parcel. The North Coast Highway Solar 1, LLC is a competing filing on Agricultural Exclusive (AE). A reasonable finder of fact would not be able to see 2mW of solar on AE as compatible. Trying to use pollinators under panels that some applicants used in other states is a farce. First, allowing this by CUP would make applicants seeking cannabis farms indifferent. Greenhouse and growing plants is akin to the glass and steel canopies of applicants solar array and pollinator plants. Second, is vegetation in the nearby area lacking in pollinators or wouldn't this issue be raised and resolved before North Coast Highway Solar 1, LLC's filing? The climate and local farming show field grasses and timber plants are marketable and best for economy. Big large picture, importance of AE land is tied to ability to support Ag products- like food or grazing for food stock. Nether seem furthered by pollinator plants. Lastly, are pollinator plants going to grow when 80% of area will be shaded and coupled with the specific local cloud/rainy climate. The analog pollinator uses are in dryer areas? Lastly, would think local farm bureau, and ag associations in area would have more concerns to local economy this North Coast Highway Solar 1, LLC site creates.

Sincerely,

**Daniel Hale, Principal**  
**Sunthurst Energy, LLC**  
MRED, LEED AP, STI Certified  
P: 310.975.4732

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**From:** Dorris, Joshua [mailto:JDorris@co.humboldt.ca.us]  
**Sent:** Monday, January 11, 2021 1:45 PM  
**To:** Sunthurst Energy <daniel@sunthurstenergy.com>  
**Cc:** Lazar, Steve <SLazar@co.humboldt.ca.us>  
**Subject:** Hatchery Road Solar Project SCH #2021010092

Hi Daniel,

The MND for the Hatchery Road Solar Project has been published to the SCH and the 30 day review period will be from 1/12 - 2/12. It is forecast for decision by the Planning Commission at its meeting of 3/18.

Should you have any questions on the project please feel free to contact me.

Thanks,  
Joshua

Joshua Z. Dorris  
Planner  
Humboldt County Planning & Building Department  
3015 H Street  
Eureka, CA 95501  
(707) 268-3779  
[jdorris@co.humboldt.ca.us](mailto:jdorris@co.humboldt.ca.us)

**Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Sue Y Lee <sue.lee@humboldt.edu>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 14, 2021 11:46 PM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** Solar facility near Blue Lake

Dear Planning Commissioners,

We are 100% supportive of the proposed solar facility near Blue Lake. As the demand for energy increases, this project will help Humboldt County become less dependent on fossil fuel use for generating electricity. We appreciate that the proposal still allows agricultural use.

We ask for your enthusiastic support on this project.

Sincerely,  
Archie S. Mossman  
sue y. lee mossman  
PO Box 223  
Arcata, CA 95518  
707.677.3669



**Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Jason Slyter <94jlso38@att.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 22, 2021 8:59 AM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** SOLAR FARM IN BLUE LAKE

Thank you all for taking this essential project into consideration. Solar power has proven to outlast all other types of renewable energy in terms of usable power and the infrastructure has improved vastly over the last few years to make this choice a no brainer. We can't wait any longer to intact solutions to our climate change crisis. Please pass this project through and use it as an example to others who are considering similar projects.

Regards, Jason Slyter  
Eureka, Ca  
94jlso38@att.net

## Dorris, Joshua

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**From:** Susan Ornelas <susieqbean@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 15, 2021 3:58 PM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Cc:** Wilson, Mike  
**Subject:** Solar Farm on Hatchery and an Idea

Dear Humboldt County Planning Commissioners and Supervisor Wilson,

Hello! I am writing as a private citizen who worked to develop and grow the North Coast Growers Assn. and Farmers Market since the late 1970's, - I was one of the first farmers to sell there, and I served on the NCGA Board for 4 years. I taught Sustainable Agriculture at HSU for 12 years (1990-2002). In 2001-2, I found funding for myself (from the Switzer Foundation) to assist the HC Planning Department in developing and writing the ***Agriculture and Natural Resource*** section of the current ***General Plan***.

In this email I am including research I did as to the soil quality of the 25 acre parcel chosen for the proposed Solar Farm on Hatchery Rd. (research below), but I also want to offer an idea for agricultural loss 'mitigation' if it is deemed that solar power is truly needed **now** by the community.

If the Planning Commission should deem it the best community value to permit this solar farm, then I want to offer this idea - That the loss of prime agriculture opportunity be somewhat mitigated by the client committing to 'X' amount of money being donated to HSU yearly for a study report of the effects of the solar panels on the soil quality, beneficial insects, soil status, plant communities, agriculture crops, (if some are farmed), animal husbandry, bees, etc. There could be required base studies of the soil quality, beneficial insects, eco-system analysis, water infiltration, flooding, etc.; and then if certain students want to use the site for a crop study, or other co-management issues that come up in the 30 years of the solar farm being permitted, this could add to the data.

I think a study such as this would be very interesting- it would track conditions for 30 years of having a solar array on an agricultural site with documented information about soil quality, progress of stated goals such as pollinator productivity, other agricultural activities that occur of the 30 years. It would document beneficial and/or any detrimental effects to the eco-system and the community - and might be very interesting! I am not sure of the economics of the whole project, but it seems like \$5-10,000/year to document the stated goals and conditions of the permit, with an eye to making the system better, and potentially optimizing an agriculture / solar power production.

If the tax-deductible donation to HSU went to a professor, who worked with a grad student to produce the report each year - it could be done pretty reasonably priced.

I spoke to Aaron Halimi of Renewable Properties about the idea of a collaboration with HSU and while he was in support of the collaboration, and he expressed interest in the research this could unfold - he thought the company could only provide access, and no monetary commitment. My suggestion is that if we are giving up this prime agriculture property we should ask for something in return. A better understanding of the optimization of the solar array / agricultural production seems a good start.

Thanks for listening.

**Following is the soil research I did on that site:**

The USDA Soil Survey maps show the soil of this site designated as:

Unit Name	Percent	Soil Designation
Loleta 2 to 5% slope	8.5 %	Prime soil
Fluvents, 0 to 2% slope	0.2 %	Not prime, occasionally floods
Megwil and Cannonball soils, 0 to 5% slope	85.9 %	Prime soil
Lepoil-Candymountain complex 2 to 15% slope	3%	Prime soil
Duzen, 0 to 7% slope	2.5%	undetermined

This makes that parcel > 97% prime agriculture land. Even if these calculations are 10% off due to inaccuracies in an on-line map interpretation – this is prime agricultural soil.

The USDA defines prime farmland as the land best suited to food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops. Prime farmland produces the highest yields with minimal inputs of energy and economic resources, and farming it results in the least damage to the environment. Location can be incorporated in the definition of prime agriculture also - if soils are surrounded by large expanses of undeveloped, productive soils and location characteristics include unique farmland located within expanding urban areas.

The site is zoned AE – Agriculture Exclusive. The Humboldt County General Plan designates AE land with prime soils as critical to the sustainability of the County and says conversion should only occur if there are no feasible alternatives and there is overriding public interest. Besides being productive and accessible, prime soils provide open space, scenic values, and related amenity benefits, important in a planning and zoning context. ‘*No Net Loss*’ of agriculture productivity is called out as a policy in the General Plan.

Andrew. P. Stubblefield  
Professor of Hydrology and Watershed Management  
Department of Forestry and Wildland Resources  
\*\*\*\*\*

## Dorris, Joshua

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**From:** Chip Sharpe <chipsharpe@sbcglobal.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 09, 2021 6:33 PM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** Solar opportunities for Humboldt County

Dear Planning Commissioners,

We are very pleased to read of a proposal to install photovoltaic panels in a grazing pasture near Blue Lake. I have read before of the advantages to crop farming when panels are positioned so as to be compatible with cultivation of plants, and now we learn that a “solar farm” can also provide protection from wind and sun for grazing animals.

It’s exciting to see such proactive and creative problem solving. Please give your enthusiastic support to further development of solar power, which is proceeding to fulfill our energy needs at a rate much greater than was thought possible just a few years ago.

We have had photovoltaic panels on our roof for about 18 years. We are encouraged by the continuing refinements of this technology and very hopeful for our future.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Celestine Armenta & Chip Sharpe  
1644 Old Arcata Road  
Bayside CA 95524-9301

[You may text or call at 7075996009]

**Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Sandy Dardenelle <brackenelle@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 10, 2021 3:42 PM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** Solar photovoltaic facility in Blue Lake

I just heard about this and think it is a wonderful idea. I am completely in support of it.

Sincerely,  
Sandy Dardenelle

## Dorris, Joshua

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**From:** Ken Dunn <kdunn@nflmill.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 17, 2021 9:18 AM  
**To:** Ford, John  
**Cc:** Dorris, Joshua; Bill Love; Aaron Halimi  
**Subject:** Solar Project at Korbel

All,

*Renewable Properties reached out to us a couple years ago when they were originally siting their project and we were not interested in leasing our land for solar at that time. They have reached back out again and recently spent time visiting with us in person. Unfortunately we're not interested in leasing our land for solar – the contract term is too long and there are possible better uses for our land. Should anything change on our end, we'll be sure to reach out to Renewable Properties.*

Best Regards,

Ken Dunn  
General Plant Manager  
North Fork Lumber Company  
PO Box 1038  
Blue Lake, CA 95525

Business: (707) 667-8119  
Cell: (530) 524-1116



**Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Jenifer Pace <1jeniferpace@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 12, 2021 7:54 PM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** solar project in Blue Lake

Just want to add a thumbs up on this proposed project that combines grazing with pv solar panels.  
It's a win-win and the right time is definitely NOW. Great idea!!!



## **Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Elaine Benjamin <bluechairpress@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 27, 2021 3:00 PM  
**To:** Dorris, Joshua  
**Subject:** Solar project on Hatchery Road in Blue Lake

We're all for solar power but this site is inappropriate and all of the construction vehicles would have to go through the heart of Blue Lake. Our new Annie & Mary Trail is drawing more bicycle/skating and foot traffic and these trucks would be crossing it. They would also be going by the school which will be back in session. Please don't subject our little town to this!

For the love of Blue Lake,  
Elaine Benjamin  
Marlene Smith

**Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Sylvia Shaw <sls500@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 14, 2021 8:52 PM  
**To:** Planning Clerk  
**Subject:** Support Hatchery Road Solar Project, Please

Dear Commissioners,

I ask you to support the Hatchery Road Solar Project as a Humboldt step towards a local renewable energy shed to meet the goals of 100% renewables by 2025.

The ability of this project to supply renewable energy and remain agriculturally productive is a win-win for Humboldt. The drawbacks of the project appear to be outweighed by the benefits.

Please vote in favor of Hatchery Road Solar.

Sylvia Shaw  
975 8th  
Arcata, CA

## **Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Nathalie Richcreek <njrichcreek@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 14, 2021 8:36 PM  
**To:** Planning Clerk

We are living in a time of climate crisis, an emergency that needs government to wake up and start solar, wind and other clean energy projects in every city, county and state. The project for the solar panels in Blue Lake at the Hatchery must be Ok'd by everyone on the Planning Commission. Please allow this as well as other clean energy options to be created in Humboldt County asap. No longer can anyone think climate change is a hoax. Scientists have been telling us since the late 70's the planet is warming and the glaciers are melting. I have listened and educated myself as well as others since I learned of this disastrous scientific fact that unless we humans stop the overuse of fossil fuels all life on earth will become extinct. This is the 6th extinction of our planet. We did this so we must fix what we have done wrong. The planet is crying out by extinction of species daily. We can do this with proper clean energy sources. Stop fossil fuels now!

## Dorris, Joshua

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**From:** randycarrico@gmail.com  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 14, 2021 7:29 PM  
**To:** Planningclerk@co.humboldt.ca.us

" <Planningclerk@co.humboldt.ca.us>  
From: <randycarrico@gmail.com>  
Subject: Hatchery Road Solar Project  
Date: Sun, 14 Feb 2021 19:29:13 -0800  
Importance: normal  
X-Priority: 3  
Content-Type: multipart/alternative;  
boundary="\_279FE434-CA78-47D6-A02E-2CDD84F4F87E\_"

--\_279FE434-CA78-47D6-A02E-2CDD84F4F87E\_  
Content-Transfer-Encoding: quoted-printable  
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="utf-8"

Dear Sirs:

HATCHERY ROAD SOLAR: REASONS TO APPROVE THE PROJECT 1. We appreciate that Humboldt County is taking the climate crisis seriously. It is a threat that is global but the solutions often come down to local decisions like promoting renewable energy installations.

2. This project will reduce our dependence on the natural gas fired power plant on Humboldt Bay, reducing the county's greenhouse gas emissions. The power the project provides will help mitigate the fact that Humboldt County peak power utilization exceeds the capacity of the transmission lines into the County.

3. It will be a move in the right direction to enable the county to achieve the 100% renewable electricity by 2025 that they have committed to. If approved, the project can be operational by July of this year!

4. The general plan designation for the parcels is agricultural and it specifies that renewable electricity installations are allowed. The property will not be converted out of agricultural. The proposal to use the property for bee habitat and/or grazing have been used successfully at other solar installations around the world. The Planning Department document (link above) evaluates use of agricultural land for solar in great detail. The decision to approve this project is clearly based on significant and careful consideration. It should be noted that the underlying land, soil condition, or land use are not changed permanently, as they might be with other land use.

5. Most of the jobs in this project are in the construction phase. It would be an economic benefit to the County if those jobs would go to local, living wage contractors.

6. Some comments have suggested aesthetics is a problem. But aesthetics are time-bound and culturally specific. As the Planning Department document says: Viewer response may be negative for viewers who place a high value on open space, or positive for viewers who place a high value on renewable energy. The limited expanse of the project feature and the limited importance of the affected viewpoints result in the impacts being less than significant.

7. Under CEQA, possible impacts are significant or not. This project has very few significant impacts and the County agrees that all of them can be mitigated to insignificance. As the Planning Department document summarizes: The project will not degrade the quality of the environmental, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal. Although no

special status species were observed on the project site, potential biological impacts related to special status bird species would be reduced to less than significant levels. In the event archaeological artifacts are found [mitigation measures] would reduce potential impacts to less than significant levels. Therefore, impacts would be considered less than significant with mitigation incorporated. We suggest to the developers that they consider offering a community benefit. For example, the community wants to put in a trail from downtown Blue Lake out to the hatchery and a financial contribution could make that a reality.

Thank you  
Randy Carrico  
1930 H St.  
Eureka CA

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**Dorris, Joshua**

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**From:** Michael Dehority <mijdeh@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 02, 2021 4:10 PM  
**To:** Dorris, Joshua  
**Subject:** Yes - Solar Array on Hatchery Road

This is to voice my strong support for the solar project on Hatchery Rd. Unfortunately, I can not be at the meeting tonight. I did want to register my support because I believe this project will be good for Blue Lake, good for Humboldt County, and mostly because it will be good for the world we are leaving for our kids to inherit.

Thank You,

Michael Dehority