



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

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June 11, 2019

Mr. E. Joaquin Esquivel, Chair
State Water Resources Control Board
P.O. Box 100
Sacramento, CA 95812-0100

Re: Support for Grant Request for Middle Eel River Basin Water Conservation and Watershed Restoration Pilot Project

Dear Chairman Esquivel,

The Humboldt County Board of Supervisors is in support of the Eel River Recovery Project's (ERRP) request for support of its organizing work in the remote Middle Eel River watershed. Their plan is to help local residents, including cannabis farmers, to conserve water and adopt best agricultural practices. This will limit water pollution and would be complementary to the State's regulatory and enforcement efforts. While our County has also established a regulatory framework, we welcome any well organized and supported effort to curb water pollution and stream flow depletion associated with cultivation, and ERRP provides a proactive strategy to resolve potential problems.

ERRP has been extremely successful working with rural cannabis communities, as reflected by its work done previously for the State Water Resource Control Board (SWRCB) in 2015 and 2016, where hundreds of farmers were educated, and 70 farms were visited to provide technical assistance on best practices implementation. This project represents a logical extension of their past work and focuses on one of the most challenging areas in the Eel River watershed for regulation and enforcement.

The SWRCB was granted authority to fund modest projects at its discretion and we believe that this highly innovative and locally driven project is an excellent candidate for such support. The legalization and subsequent regulation of commercial cannabis operations has resulted in significant economic dislocation in portions of the cannabis community in Humboldt County, at the same time as offering an opportunity to make important improvements to water quality. We believe this project could be very beneficial in that regard.

Sincerely,

Rex Bohn, Chair
County of Humboldt