

JUN 23 2025


Comment for item J2: Letter of Opposition Low Impact Camping

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

From Genevieve Marchand <Genevieve.Marchand@humboldt.edu>

Date Mon 6/23/2025 2:34 PM

Cc Bohn, Rex <RBohn@co.humboldt.ca.us>; Bushnell, Michelle <mbushnell@co.humboldt.ca.us>; Arroyo, Natalie <narroyo@co.humboldt.ca.us>; Madrone, Steve <smadrone@co.humboldt.ca.us>; Wilson, Mike <Mike.Wilson@co.humboldt.ca.us>; COB <COB@co.humboldt.ca.us>

Public comment on
J.2 1 attachment (202 KB)

Opposition letter HipCamp AB 518.pdf;

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Dear Supervisors,

As a long time North Coast local and professor of Recreation Administration at Cal Poly Humboldt, I am writing to ask you to vote "No" on Item J2: *Letter of Opposition Unless Amended to Assembly Bill (AB) 518 (Ward) Regarding Low-Impact Camping Areas Unless Amended to Address Safety and Agricultural Protection Concerns.*

Instead, I encourage you to support California Assembly Bill 518 without qualification. AB 518 would create more access to the outdoors in California and support long-term economic growth here in Humboldt County, something we greatly need.

AB 518 creates a state framework for defining "low-impact camping areas" to ensure these activities are responsible, safe, and environmentally sustainable. It empowers Humboldt County to make our own choices about if, where, and how to permit small-scale camping by reducing costly state development standards for local landowners who want to welcome visitors. This bill is not a mandate; the County can opt in to the exemption it creates and decide what additional standards will make sense for our community. We do not need to impose more restrictions at the state level to create the policy we'd like to see here at home.

"Low-impact camping areas" and Assembly Bill 518 pose such an incredible opportunity for our region. For example, a majority of the land adjacent to the Great Redwood Trail, which stands to become one of the longest rails-to-trails routes in the country, is privately owned and relatively undeveloped. If we want people to be able to access this trail and want our region to realize its economic benefits, we need to create small-scale camping options on private lands.

Allowing rural landowners to host campers ensures that tourism dollars stay in Humboldt County, gives landowners a secondary source of revenue to help conserve and maintain their properties, and diverts campers from overcrowded public sites to locally run, safe, and well-managed areas. Low-impact camping areas also support visitors who are trying to visit our area but can't because of the lack of public camping options or affordable alternatives during busy seasons. Too often, people drive straight through our beautiful county and spend their money elsewhere.

Further, low-impact camping opportunities provide our Cal Poly Humboldt students opportunities to learn and work with local community members on rural economic development opportunities tied to Outdoor Recreation and Tourism. That is the case in Fall 2025, where students will work with the town of Orick to research and develop ideas for revitalization. Low-impact camping is one important asset in this process.

AB 518 will make it easier for our county to permit low-impact recreational uses that are compatible with rural landscapes and open space, that generate sustainable economic opportunities for our local landowners and main street businesses, and that increase outdoor access throughout Humboldt County.

I urge you to support AB 518 and vote "no" on item J2.

Thank you,

Dr. Geneviève Marchand, PhD, MBA

Professor of Recreation Administration

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Pronouns: she/her/hers

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June 23rd, 2025

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I urge you to support AB 518 and vote "no" on item J2.

Thank you,



Dr. Geneviève Marchand, PhD, MBA
Professor of Recreation Administration

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