

McClenagan, Laura

From: Ross Huber <rossisnow@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 10, 2022 3:09 PM
To: Planning Clerk
Subject: Concerns with Cannabis Program Letter
Attachments: Concerns About The Planning Commission Letter.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Supervisors,

In regard to the December 16h, 2021 letter from the planning commission labeled: "Concerns with Cannabis Program" please see my comments attached while considering the impacts of this letter.

Kind Regards,

Ross Huber
Garberville

01/10/2022

Dear Supervisors,

In regard to the December 16h, 2021 letter from the planning commission labeled: Concerns with Cannabis Program

Generators:

The EPA has reported that a 40 acre mature oak forest will sequester 109 cars worth of carbon emissions over a year ¹. To help with global warming, our forest land must be protected. The only way private property owners in Humboldt County can afford to protect their properties is to farm a small portion of it. The alternative is to log it, or sell the water and logging rights to a multi-national corporation. As many of the cannabis farms in Humboldt County are on forested properties, they are essentially conservation easements. When deciding if generator use is appropriate on a cannabis farm, please consider allowing the use of a carbon footprint analysis to determine if the property that is being protected by the cannabis farm is able to sequester the carbon of their operations. If a farm is sequestering more carbon than they are producing, we should be grateful that they are continuing to pay their taxes to protect the land. They may even be absorbing your carbon footprint if you do not have forest land. Generator use should not be considered an impact on these farms.

Well Use:

Additionally, a 40 acre parcel has a projected area of 1,720,000 sq ft. Using standard rainwater catchment calculations, this 40 acres would experience 1,071,560 gallons of water per inch of rainfall. In Southern Humboldt, even during drought years, a property would receive upwards of 50 million gallons of rainfall. A 1 acre farm (most are much smaller) would use less than 1% of this water for the cultivation of cannabis. Is it reasonable to be able to utilize less than 1% of the water that falls on your property to make a living that pays for protecting that property? I think so. Please consider this fact when evaluating if well use is appropriate. Please consider the overall water balance of a property when making these decisions.

Roads:

These properties are out these long country roads because cannabis was unjustly made illegal, and that is where they had to be to exist. The county has already adopted a policy that says we should not be punishing people for being affected by the war on drugs. If it was not illegal, the farms would not have been out there in the first place. If there is no cannabis out these roads, there will be nobody around to pay for maintenance of these roads. Whether or not they meet an arbitrary class 4 road standard is irrelevant to the fact that these roads have existed for decades and have served our communities well. Please do not make rural living illegal. Just see what issues do exist, and help these tax payers fix them. Humboldt County knows better than any other county how hard it is to maintain country roads. 1.0 farms have earned this concession, and the impact is pre-existing. Again, removing the ability of landowners to make a living and pay for road maintenance will only lead to environmental harm. There is no requirement that landowners fix roads if they are not growing cannabis.

I have used a 40 acre forested parcel for my example, but each property will have unique characteristics that should be evaluated. We are all concerned about global warming and the drought. The problem is that taking our worries out on these farms is going to backfire when these farms have to sell the forest land that has not been logged in 40 years because that is the only option left. I would suggest that not allowing the 1.0 farming to continue would need to be evaluated by a new EIR. The aesthetic and environmental issues of closing cannabis farms and logging them would be a serious impact that should be considered. The work that these farms are doing to fix the damage from legacy logging operations would need to stop if they can no longer afford to pay for the work. Be careful how you address this for legacy farms. Come visit a legacy farm and walk the woods with a farmer. I think you will be surprised to learn how many of them love and care for their properties. It's not all impacts out here. There is good work being done allowing cannabis farming in our communities.

Thank you for your time and your efforts addressing this very difficult situation.

Kind Regards,

Ross Huber
Garberville.

1. (<https://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/04/science/how-many-pounds-of-carbon-dioxide-does-our-forest-absorb.html>)