

My name is Joey Burger and I'm a lifelong resident of Southern Humboldt, a Permaculture Educator and a Regenerative Cannabis Consultant with over 27 years of experience in the cannabis industry. I was contacted by Dan Kulchin in January of 2021 to assist him with developing his newly acquired Miller Creek property. It had fallen into major disrepair prior to his acquisition and Dan had a vision to make this property a shining example of Regenerative Farming and showcase the best practices Humboldt is known for. Our industry has largely been dominated by extractive practices that rely heavily on fossil fuels and reduce our natural resources. Thankfully knowledge of Natural and Regenerative Farming practices is starting to take hold in our region and Dan wanted the Miller Creek project to help push that mission forward.

We had several main goals in mind with this project:

1. Clean up the property and make it a suitable destination for cannabis tourism, to showcase the natural beauty of Humboldt and to promote and educate visitors on Regenerative and Natural Farming practices.
2. Create Defensible Space around buildings, ingress and egress to property and to use the resources generated from clearing of fire ladders in building soil fertility.
3. Convert existing outdoor cultivation site from heavy water use smart pots to water conscious Hugelkultur beds that slow, spread and sink water back into the water table.
4. Limit land disturbance and neighborhood impacts.
5. Identify key animal corridors and increase animal and pollinator habitats through planting of a market garden, and a diverse planting of fruit trees, berries, herbs and pollinator plants.
6. Train staff on Natural Farming best practices including making of homemade fertilizers, pesticides, fungicides and microbial solutions made from sources grown and wildcrafted from the land.

Over the months I've been involved in the project I've watched several dead cars and many tons of garbage be removed from the property and it has started to again show its natural beauty. The easy access afforded to this property from Brice Land Rd will make it an easy destination for tourists to reach and enjoy the sights and sounds of nature and all our beautiful region is known for.

Not only did we make this property much safer through the clearing of fire ladders but we worked with several landowners in the Miller Creek watershed to create defensible space on their properties as well. While the sounds of chainsaws and chippers can be a nuisance this is valuable work that all CA landowners should be undertaking during the wet winter and spring months to reduce fire fuel loads on their properties. While this project was heavy on the construction side in its infancy the beds built from these resources will be fertile for up to 50 years and require little to no additional inputs or maintenance.

All of the wood resources generated from our forest thinning effort was used in the construction of our Hugelkultur beds. Normally these thinnings are burned releasing carbon into the atmosphere. Hugelkultur beds built of buried wood sequester carbon and are considered the

best practice in farming for building soil fertility that can last for decades, reduce water usage and extend the growing season leading to increased yields of all crops. These beds built on contour (perfectly level on the landscape) slow rainfall, spread it out over the beds and slowly sink it deep into their carbon layer that acts like a sponge holding the moisture and releasing it to plants roots during the driest months.

No native soil was graded or moved in the construction of these beds and Dan has worked diligently to work with neighbors to answer questions or remedy concerns they might have with any part of this project.

The design of these beds also reduce the chance of any runoff into the watershed as several market garden and pollinator beds were designed to sit below the cannabis beds to act as a bio filter catching any potential fertilizer runoff and using it as the valuable resource it is.

By building up the soil biology thru the use of applications of homemade microbial solutions we are able to reduce water and fertilizer usage. Pest and pathogen pressures are reduced through the use of companion plants that feed natural pest predators, trap plants that draw pests away from valuable crops and safe homemade pesticides and fungicides from plants harvested from the land. Fertilizers are made from crops grown on the land and broken down into available plant nutrients through the use of microbes harvested from the forest are safer for our watershed than anything you can purchase at a store and help reduce farm expenses.

This project should be approved for its efforts to be a good steward of the land, a shining example of the best practices Humboldt has to offer and exactly the type of conscious farm we want representing our local industry and product.

Thank you for your time

-Joey Burger
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