



Dear Planning Commissioners:

This letter concerns the North McKay Ranch project, Item F.1 on your January 6, 2022 agenda.

We the undersigned request that you a) specify that the final EIR in the McKay tract development is inadequate and b) that you reject the proposed development.

Briefly:

- CEQA does a great job of bringing to light problems. It has done so in the case of the McKay proposal. However, it also offers huge opportunities for obfuscation by Planning Department staff and administrators. In this case, the Planning Department appears to be using “motivated reasoning” to reject the statements of problems submitted by RCEA, HCACOG and Caltrans. Environmental organizations and neighbors also submitted excellent comments that were brushed off. Please read these letters with an open mind and see if you think the tortured logic of the staff in rebuttal is anything other than a highly trained defense of the developer’s castle.
- There are, despite all the contortions (especially with regard to transportation impacts), two significant environmental effects that could not be wished away: a) greenhouse gases and b) wildfire protection. Please look closely at what is proposed for mitigation. In the case of greenhouse gases it is “offsets.” It has now been amply demonstrated that most offsets are less than they purport to be and many are scams. Even when they are allowed, under cap and trade, for example, they are required to be limited (in California to 4% of emissions reductions as of now).

In this case, the “mitigation” of excess greenhouse gases by purchasing offsets from the Arcata Community Forest falls short. The Arcata Community Forest periodically harvests some of the biggest redwoods, an overall continual reduction in photosynthetic capacity and increase in greenhouse gases – not a sink. In fact, this so-called mitigation is a fraud because it is limited to 30 years, the putative life of the project. The Planning Department promotes a fiction that major projects like this, Terra Gen, and the Nordic Aquafarm only last for 30 years. So the mitigation only lasts for 30 years. Is there anyone except the king in his new clothes who believes the greenhouse gases from this 1950s style suburban development will be limited to 30 years?

- This is another example of planning processes being unfairly biased toward those who want to be wealthy now versus our children and their children and their children who



will live with the consequences of climate disasters. Planning commissioners must be Stakeholders for the Future!

- The bias of this whole process is seen very clearly in the response to the CEQA requirement that project alternatives be considered. The real alternative to this project is infill and building up, not more single family homes with automobiles, drive-to shopping centers, and woodstoves. The proposed “environmentally superior” alternative did the exact opposite, reducing density! We believe the only choice left you is to vote “no project.”

The climate crisis is real. In Humboldt County we still have no idea how we will manage sea level rise, or if it is even possible. This is not the time to signal that business as usual with a few EV chargers is just fine. Our attempts to mitigate climate change are decades behind. The Climate Action Plan asks only that we cut emissions 40% by 2030; that would have been a good goal for 2000. Sonoma County has adopted a CAP that will reduce emissions by 80% by 2030. We have to do better in order to have a chance at preserving major elements of the world that we grew up enjoying. Is the McKay subdivision what we want to bequeath to the next generations and what we want as a monument to our better selves in a time of crisis?

350 Humboldt Steering Committee

Daniel Chandler, Ph.D.

Diane Ryerson, M.A.

Laura Simpson

Signed also by the following community members.

Michael	Tomczyszyn	94132	Joyce	Heyn	92064
Peter	Lee	94118	Carol	Mone	95570
Jerry	Martien	95503	Rebecca	Stauffer	95524
Laura	Simpson	95519	Jo Ann	Huffman	95501
Dennis	Allen	93101	Christine	Doyka	95542
Sunnie	Noellert	95519	Marijane	Poulton	95570
Diane	Ryerson	95521	Sue	Mossman	95518
Rush	Rehm	94062	Irith	Shalmony	95521
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Grassroots Climate Action

Carol	Lee	95503	Judith	Foster	95521
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Cathy	Chandler- Klein	95521	Barbara	Barratt	95521
Nancy	Ihara	95521	Linda	Alm	95521
Betina	Garsen	95501	Laura	Guldin	95521
Myra	Toth	93023	Fhyre	Phoenix	95519
Lee	Dedini	95524	Utkarsh	Nath	94555
sue	hilton	95521	Daniel	Chandler	95570
Archie	Mossman	95518	Henry	Millstein	95501
Beth	Herrmann	95501	Jenifer	Pace	95521
Charles	Chamberlin	95521	Kenzie	Mullen	95501
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