

September 18, 2016

To: City Manager, Linda Ruffing
Fort Bragg City Council
Mendocino County Board of Supervisors

Subject: Central Coast Transfer Station Project

What I'm hearing from the proponents of this project is that *we cannot afford to continue the waste management process as it is today*, and I agree. However, neither can we afford to destroy part of an ancient and endemic forest to streamline the current process. We would still be paying a private company to burn fossil fuels in order to take our waste to another landfill, contributing to the toxicity levels of land closer to where other people live, while not decreasing our own CO2 emissions. We can do much better than that.

We need to handle our own waste, which has two significant components - reducing consumption and creatively managing the things we do use. This becomes easier to manage when more products are produced locally. There are now five Rs that represent the current trend in managing our personal waste streams: Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Rot. Refuse what you don't need, Reduce what you do need and whenever possible Reuse, Recycle what you use, and Rot compostable items.

Cities all over the country have adopted Zero Waste Ordinances. San Francisco adopted such an ordinance in 2005 with the goal to achieve zero waste by 2020, and they are now diverting about 90% (approx. 900,000 tons annually) from landfills. Partnering with *Recology*, an employee-owned, locally-based waste management company, they hope to become the first zero-waste city in the U.S. Among their repurposed waste streams are reusable construction materials and food scraps and yard clippings (some 400 tons per day) that are turned into compost.

Earth has entered her *Sixth Mass Extinction Event*, only this time degradation, collapse and extinctions are occurring at an extremely accelerated rate. Nobody knows exactly when, how or where each of the impending crises will reach their respective tipping points. However, with the tremendous leap in scientific discoveries and the latest in technological advancements, that we are facing cataclysmic planetary changes can no longer be denied.

The "Climate 21" case is a lawsuit filed against the U.S. Government by the nonprofit *Our Children's Trust* on behalf of 21 plaintiffs ages 8-19. This case is going to trial, after a favorable ruling in a federal District Court in April, that after being reviewed by the U.S. District Court was upheld last week. According to *Our Children's Trust*, "the plaintiffs are suing the federal government for violating their constitutional rights to life, liberty and property and their right to essential public trust resources, by permitting, encouraging and otherwise enabling continued exploitation, production and combustion of fossil fuels."

We cannot afford to continue "business as usual" practices. Now is the time for creative, new thinking and bold actions.

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