

March 30, 2020

Dear Supervisors of Mendocino County:

The Redwood Empire Fair is currently not available for use as a homeless shelter due to the fact that four schools are on the property, as well as the racetrack. Additionally, in June and August we put on two different fairs.

A very large part of the fairs includes young people who are members of 4H and FFA. These youngsters range in age from 6-19 years of age and they camp in the area which is being discussed for housing homeless. A concern around the use of this land for homeland housing is the possibility of syringes and debris being left behind. The likelihood of the 4H and FFA members receiving puncture wounds from discarded syringes is very high. This is concerning.

The schools which are housed at our facility may take objection to homeless being housed within feet of their classrooms. It is possible that they could choose to relocate if presented with this situation. This would further impact the fairgrounds negatively.

The negative financial impact suffered by the Redwood Empire Fair following its use as a facility for homeless is one from which the fair would most likely not recover. Removal of the new residents would not be easy, if possible at all, and they may impede our ability to hold the June and August fairs which are our primary means of remaining fiscally solvent.

Finally, the Redwood Empire Fairgrounds is often called upon to serve as an emergency camp during wildfires, and other natural disasters. The facility will not be available for this use if homeless are housed on the grounds.

For the reasons above both Jennifer Seward, the CEO of the Redwood Empire Fair and myself, the current President of the Fair Board object to the use of the Redwood Empire fairgrounds as a homeless encampment.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 707 376-8936, or emcrawford68@gmail.com.

Respectfully,

Eric Crawford

Board President of the 12 District Fair