

August 3, 2020

Dear Mendocino County Supervisors,

I do not understand why you are considering abandoning our comprehensive and protective cannabis ordinance and replacing it with a use permit based ordinance that would open our rangelands to more cannabis growing and all its potentially devastating environmental impacts.

Our rangelands and rivers are already water-stressed. Have you conducted a study to evaluate the water resources in our rangelands? Have you considered the impact of increased cannabis growing on salmon and steelhead? Do you have a plan to increase our county's resources for fighting fires in steep remote terrain?

Do you have an efficient and cost-effective way to accurately evaluate the cumulative environmental impacts of each new application? Are you prepared to do an EIR?

The public needs to be included in all decisions that affect our environment and our quality of life. Most use permit decisions are not open to the public—they occur “in-house” at the discretion of individual planners and the planning department director. Do you realize that in choosing a use permit system you are sacrificing the public interest and environmental protections for potentially unnecessary cost saving?

Please work with county staff to resolve any issues are holding up permits, and find a way within the existing ordinance to make the permitting process more efficient and less costly.

Thank you for your attention,

Michael Charnes