

To Mendocino County Board of Supervisors,

The Mitchell Creek THP is one of three contagious THPs that are planned for the next three years, in addition to more THPs to be planned for the Big River Watershed. The forest is not supposed to be a giant industrial zone. This is where we live and where our water comes from and where we go to be out of the city. Thousands of people access the forest for recreation and tourism. Compromising access and benefits of a healthy forest through excessive industrial scale logging hurts our local economy, our climate, and narrowly serves the capital interests. Using the forest to maximize profits is no longer sustainable and harmful to the forest and local citizens.

We have the right participate and have a voice in how land is managed. Piecing out the entire forest management plan into smaller plans, further does a disservice to the interests of local citizens who are put into the position of repeatedly challenging government and powerful industries. The State shows favoritism to the timber interests by limiting public participation in the larger, long term general planning. THPs were discussed by the JAG at the Fall 2020 meeting, a meeting that was closed to the public, despite laws protecting open meetings, and the Governors order to ensure meetings remain open. It is concerning that our public servants would ignore the interests of their fellow citizens and disregard the law in such a manner. Going forward with other planned THPS in the area, I hope the JAG will show the respect and common decency of following the law and respecting the rights of citizens and allowing our concerns to be incorporated in planning.

The Ca Environmental Quality Act is law and should be respected. Those entrusted with governing are charged to protect our citizen owned forest and to follow the laws protecting the forest from exploitation from industrial scale logging. THPs impact watersheds which are an essential feature of a healthy forest. The entire headwaters of Mitchell Creek will be impacted by this THP, likely removing mostly larger trees and thus compromising the balance and ecology of the forest. Industrial scale logging does not protect or encourage healthy forests and watersheds, but instead sacrifices the long term value and benefits of the forest for the short term capital gain. We need healthy forests for reasons beyond making money. We have a massive wave of global extinctions happening and frequent droughts, all part of the climate crisis. We need salmon and all the other animals that give our environment its resiliency. Surely those in power to protect our forest are aware of the bigger picture.

As a Forest Manager, I ask you to consider what you are managing the forest for. If it is only for the money they can produce then that is a sad comment about how we care for our forests. Please protect the health of our forest, including wildlife and water, and find a better way to manage the timber.

Thank you,

Sakina Bush
Fort Bragg, CA