

Honorable Chair Dan Gjerde and Members of the Board,

Our family in Redwood Valley respectfully requests that you reject the proposal to extend the provisional licensing program's sunset date to January 1, 2028.

We are disappointed that this important matter has not had a Town Hall to solicit input. This proposal does not represent our community's wishes and will extend an environment of lawlessness with even more proliferation of large and illegal cannabis farming activities. We need your help to stop this situation, not to stretch it for more than half a decade.

The Redwood Valley community has expressed its wishes clearly and succinctly about the cultivation of cannabis in the Community Action Plan of 2017 and shared this document with PBS and BOS in July of 2020. The plan itself is the result of many community meetings and discussions as well as considerable individual efforts. About cannabis cultivation, it states the following: "Participants expressed concern about the cultivation of cannabis on small parcels, large scale indoor or outdoor grows, the impacts of those growers who remain in the underground economy, and the impacts on neighbors of new legal grows. SPECIFICALLY, CANNABIS CULTIVATION IN THE REDWOOD VALLEY MAC AREA SHALL BE RESTRICTED TO PARCELS OF 5 ACRES OR LARGER."

We would like you to extend the 'grace' period to no more than two years, which is ample time to comply with CEQA for those who are serious about growing cannabis legally in Mendocino. Established, family-owned cannabis farms will have the opportunity thrive without undue and illegal competition and set the standard for a local and environmentally friendly alternative that will be a signature product of our county.

Even more importantly, Redwood Valley is likely to experience severe drought conditions and experience strong restrictions on water use. During growing season, dozens of truckloads of water, at 3,000 gallons a load, are pumped from under Redwood Valley. This practice is not sustainable and endangers the water supply for everyone else.

We respectfully request the Board to consider the following ideas:

1. Direct staff to terminate those applications which do not have and apparently cannot obtain a State provisional license.
2. Require that all remaining applications show proof that any water usage is from a legal, sustainable source.
3. In fairness to all, including legally permitted cultivators and those applying to be legal, enforce the prohibitions on illegal cannabis cultivation.

We will work with you in every possible way to help with the development of a sustainable cannabis culture that protects the integrity of our communities and supports legal, local cannabis farmers.

Sincerely,

Pien and Paul Yarbrough
Redwood Valley, February 22, 2021