

I have written before to let you know how disastrous big grows have been in our little cul-de-sac. No one had water in September, security guards circled in giant trucks, fences went up, vernal ponds were bulldozed, beautiful black oaks chopped down, etc., etc.

But now I write with a way forward. Think: What is priceless in this day and age? A brand.

Mendocino and Humboldt counties own the branding rights to the best marijuana on the planet. The perfect terroir, sun, Mediterranean climate, eighty years of careful breeding... it adds up to a product that can be equaled nowhere else.

Both counties could capitalize on this in a big way by incentivizing small, organic, sun-grown, heritage pot. Hand-manicured, passed by a lab, marketed in-county as the absolute high-end product it is. People love to buy the best. People would fight to get it.

Instead, the county is considering destroying what makes Mendocino itself truly priceless. Instead of forests and wildlife and salmon, we will have pollution, drought, fences, and rat poison. People who are doing big grows don't care about the county. They don't even live here.

Imagine if in the '60s Napa and Sonoma decided to compete with the Central Valley as the biggest raisin growers in the state. They ripped out all the cabernet and merlot grapes and went into industrial raisin growing. They sprayed toxins everywhere and destroyed the Russian River and turned those cute towns into wastelands. This is exactly what you are considering—making a sow's ear out of a silk purse.

Please rethink. You can't get back paradise.

Linnea Due