

Inland Mendocino County Land Trust

P.O. Box 205 Ukiah, CA 95482

April 15, 2021

County of Mendocino
Board of Supervisors
Sent via e-mail
501 Low Gap Rd. Ukiah, CA 95482

Dear Supervisors,

The Board of Directors of the Inland Mendocino County Land Trust has serious concerns about the proposed ordinance expanding cannabis production to rangelands, and enlarging acreage for commercial grows. As volunteer board members, we have been working for over twenty years to preserve the natural lands that still surround us.

Mendocino County's lands, comprised of forests, watersheds, grasslands, woodlands, and chaparral, provide critical habitats for plant and animal species. Most if not all of these habitats occur in our designated rangelands. These natural resources will be adversely impacted if the Board of Supervisors votes to adopt the proposed Commercial Cannabis Activity Land Use Ordinance.

Preserving rangelands in their current state has myriad benefits for Mendocino County residents and for local wildlife. We have the privilege of living close to the natural world. Most Californians have lost this privilege. With the reality of climate change upon us, preserving open space habitats and their resources is essential to the health of our residents and wildlife communities. Clean and plentiful water is necessary for human, animal, and plant life, including up to 125 rare plant species in Mendocino rangelands. Maintaining sufficient water supplies is becoming more important as we face another drought this year that scientists project may extend for several years. Retaining tree canopy for cooling shade also is invaluable as we face a well-documented rise in temperatures. Animal movement through wildlife corridors depends on rangeland open space. Our ranchers and the communities that they feed thrive because rangeland zoning provides space for grazing.

The proposed Commercial Cannabis Activity Land Use Ordinance puts our open space and associated habitats and resources, including rare plants, at risk. Mendocino's natural landscapes and viewsheds will be compromised by the construction of fences and structures for cannabis cultivation. These structures will block essential wildlife corridors. Water use will increase at a time when supply is diminishing. Trees with their cooling canopies will be removed as never-before high temperatures are recorded.

The Board of the Inland Mendocino County Land Trust encourages Mendocino County supervisors to reject the proposed Ordinance. Its negative impacts on our natural resources, especially at a time when climate changes are already taking their toll, beg for science and reason to prevail.

Sincerely,

Board of Directors
Inland Mendocino County Land Trust

Alan Nicholson
Phyllis Curtis
Darcy Vaughn
Dot Brovarney
Leif Farr
MacKenzie O'Donnell
Kyle Farmer
Tim Buckner
Dave Lohse