

Dear Board of Supervisors:

According to your website, you had received letters and emails from 187 Mendocino County residents as of April 17, 2021, all of whom oppose the draft of the Cannabis Cultivation Ordinance that comes before you on April 19. I am sure you have received other such emails since that time, including this one.

These residents plead with you over and over: Please do not open our range lands to giant marijuana farms. They warn about damage to our dwindling water resources, increased fire dangers in these days of continuing drought, pollution from pesticides and fertilizers, and on and on. These people live in the towns and in the woods, on the coast and in the hills. They all beg you to protect our county, our homes, our rural lifestyles from the giant corporations and their megabucks.

In that same time period you also have received 48 letters and emails from people who want you to open up our range lands for large-scale cannabis cultivation. It will bring in a lot of money, they say, everybody will make money, the county, the businesses, and especially us. Most of these people admit that they already make money from the marijuana industry that flourishes here, and they want to make more.

And money is what it's all about, you see. Money is what makes our wheels go round and round. Money trumps all. You should make your decision based on money. That's the way it's done in Sacramento and Washington D.C. after all, always has been and always will be.

And, of course, it's that kind of thinking, that kind of decision making, that has brought our society to the brink of disaster. To burning towns and smoke-filled skies in California, to hurricanes and floods in Texas and Louisiana, to tornadoes in the South and Midwest.

It is that kind of thinking that has brought us literally mountains of plastic waste around the world, so much plastic in our oceans (110 million tons) that soon they will contain more plastic than fish, and tiny plastic particles in our lungs, livers, kidneys, and children.

Never mind all that, right? It's business as usual, money out front. Never mind what happens to our beautiful county, the quality of our lives, our children's lives.

But this time, don't, please don't. Think about it, feel about it. Our cannabis ordinance needs to be fixed, but we do not need to bring the megagrowers to Mendocino County. Keep them out of our range lands.

Joe Knight

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