

May 6, 2021

RECEIVED
MAY 06 2021

Honorable Planning Commissioners:

Planning & Building Services

As Planning Commissioners, I ask you to have the courage to take a stand for what you believe, even if you are new to the Commission and alone in your position. Your duty is to speak up for the highest good and the will of the public and not worry about what the other Commissioners, the Board of Supervisors, or Planning Staff thinks of you.

I hope you will strongly oppose the parts of the proposed Cannabis Land Use Ordinance on Thursday, May 6, 2021. Let the Board of Supervisors know that they are not listening to the will of the people. Don't let them sell our county out to corporate Cannabis with an ordinance cobbled together in haste in order to beat a deadline after which they would have to do what they should have planned to do all along: an EIR.

Here are some important points:

1) The April 27 draft allows Cannabis cultivation sites of up to 10 percent of parcel size (on parcels larger than 10 acres) in lands zoned for Agriculture as well as on Rangeland-zoned parcels that have been "previously tilled." **No one on the BOS asked to see maps showing how many acres of Ag lands or Rangelands will be impacted, but Supervisor Haschak estimated that there could be 1,000 acres in Round Valley alone.** Vineyards will definitely qualify as "previously tilled," and our beautiful, nearly pristine grazed lands may also be included (don't quote me on that).

2) The draft ordinance also allows Mixed-Light cultivation on qualifying sites, which would mean **many more acres of hoop houses (or hoop house equivalents), massive increases in electricity usage (which directly conflicts with the county's climate change policy),** and greatly increased light pollution).

3) **Wells are already going dry all over the county,** both in municipal water districts and on privately owned land. Both water districts and individuals are saying Cannabis cultivation is partly or mainly responsible for their dry wells. At the April 27 BOS meeting, the Environmental Health Department reported that **few studies have been done on the aquifers or water tables of inland Mendocino County.** The expensive hydrologic surveys that will be required of applicants will determine only the effect of Cannabis-related water use on neighboring sites. They will yield no information about cumulative effects of water usage on the watershed.

4) The special election required by these referenda is going to cost the county \$200,000-\$300,000. Humboldt County's EIR cost \$240,000. Why won't Mendocino County save the cost of a special election and the devastation of our biologically critical rangelands and just go ahead and do an EIR?

5) Jim Wood's office said that of all the counties, Mendocino County's staff has done the most atrocious job of handling Cannabis permitting. Why would we put even more responsibility in their hands with site-by-site environmental review? Ted Williams keeps saying, "Let's let the Planning Commission decide..." but how can you, our virtually volunteer Planning Commissioners, possibly find the time to accurately analyze the conditions of each site? We expect that you will be overwhelmed, that some of you will quit, and that a likewise overwhelmed planning staff will find it expedient to write, "No potential impacts" and rubber-stamp applications in-house as Administrative Permits, which do not require any notice to the public.

6) On April 26, Ted Williams testified in Sacramento (in person) in favor of extending the window that would allow counties to adopt Cannabis land use ordinances without doing EIRs. Two other parties testified, including Cresco Labs, a national company partially owned by Dennis Hunter and Jamie Warm of Henry's Originals. Who is Ted Williams representing?

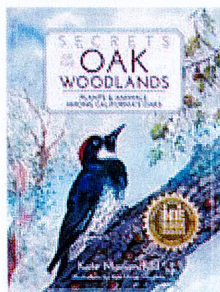
Sincerely,

Kate Marianchild

~~~~~  
Kate Marianchild

Author, *Secrets of the Oak Woodlands: Plants and Animals among California's Oaks*  
[www.katemarianchild.com](http://www.katemarianchild.com) 707-463-0839 (h) / 707-472-1930 (c)

Learn how to help insect and bird populations recover [here](#).  
Available for purchase: [Secrets of the Oak Woodlands](#) (signed copies);  
[Close-focus binoculars](#); [Oak Identification Guides](#) (full color, laminated).



To unsubscribe, email [katem@mcn.org](mailto:katem@mcn.org) with "unsubscribe" in the subject line.

