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Date: 10/28/2017 11:00:18 AM

Subject: comment on cannabis EIR

Hello-

I would like to comment on the Environmental Impact Report(EIR) for proposed regulations concerning commercial cannabis cultivation in Santa Cruz County. I have been studying this industry and sustainable environmental practices for a few years, and I have a couple of comments:

-The EIR cites significant unavoidable impact from increased traffic of people getting to jobs in the cannabis industry. At the same time, we acknowledge the industry will create thousands of local jobs - we need more local employment, and many mountain residents commute to the valley and santa cruz out of necessity to get to their jobs. Therefore, it would make sense to provide tax incentives to cannabis businesses to employ local residents. This could provide the benefit of needed jobs to county residents, and assure that the program would mitigate, rather than exacerbate, traffic and air quality conditions.

-I have heard many people repeating myths about relatively high water usage of marijuana grow operations. You would be well advised to address these myths upfront. NORML for instance provides excellent comparisons of water usage for marijuana vs other agricultural products.

-Although the EIR makes clear that groundwater issues may be mitigated, I see no discussion of the importance of rainwater capture and storage. I see no discussion in the EIR of the possibility of providing incentives for big water users to capture and store that water when it is plentiful in the winter months so as to not burden local aquifers in the dry season. While this is a good idea for anyone in the mountains, you have the opportunity in this nascent industry to set standards and standardize incentives that may ultimately provide broader benefit to the community and other local industries.

thank you

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