

From: [Dave <babadave@yahoo.com>](mailto:babadave@yahoo.com)
To: [CannabisEIR <CannabisEIR@santacruzcounty.us>](mailto:CannabisEIR@santacruzcounty.us)
Date: 10/31/2017 1:01:32 AM
Subject: Cannabis EIR comments

Greetings,

The Cannabis EIR for Santa Cruz County reemphasizes the same thing the majority of people at the supervisor meetings and the C4 have been saying all along; bringing more people into a regulated system via licensing will reduce environmental and neighborhood impacts. I still cannot comprehend how every single public meeting has had overwhelming support for our existing small farmer cottage industry yet the county supervisors continue to insist that more than 60% of current cultivation be moved to the moldy fog zone of district 4 where traffic on Hwy 1 is sure to increase. I also cannot comprehend how The Cannabis Cultivation Choices Committee's recommendations were ignored after spending months and months discussing and finally concluding that a more permissive system is the best path forward. Now we have an EIR that again tells us that allowing more of the existing cultivators into the licensing program will reduce the environmental impacts. What is wrong with our Board of Supervisors? We are a cottage industry. It is this cottage industry that needs to be licensed as is.

Traffic:

One of the big environmental impacts in the EIR is new traffic especially in the South County area where traffic is already a burden. According to a survey conducted in 2015, 70% of cultivators in Santa Cruz County are on parcels less than 5 acres and 50% are in San Lorenzo Valley. The proposed ordinance would like to relocate these people to the CA zones of south county. This is a lot of new traffic on our already saturated Hwy 1. Why not allow cultivators to continue working from home where the commute is zero miles? I recently viewed a video of Leopold suggesting these new dislocated workers drive EVs to help offset carbon emissions. Really? That's a practical solution? A better solution is to give the small cultivators a cottage license and allow them to work from home and not drive at all.

Environment:

Environmental concerns such as illegal grading, pumping from streams, improper pest and mold management, and fires are some of the major arguments the NIMBYers have against cultivation. The EIR has confirmed that bringing more people into a licensed system will reduce these environmental impacts by requiring proper grading permits, proper electrical permits, and odor "nuisance" mitigation. I know a group of neighbor cultivators in Boulder Creek that came together during the drought to all agree not to pump from their shared creek. They did not need a permit, or an ordinance, or state workers to tell them to do this. They did it because they care. I think these types of caring cultivators are the majority of who we are dealing with in our county. They all want to do the right thing. Let's get them ALL in the system so they can continue to do the right thing.

Jobs:

The EIR estimates that 7100 jobs will be created. This is simply not true! There are at least 7100 jobs in the industry now, but these jobs are under the table and invisible to the system. Allow workers to continue to work from home to mitigate traffic impacts. The proposed cultivation ordinance will displace many entrepreneurs and small businesses and force most people to work as farm labor as part time minimum wage workers. This county absolutely does not need any more minimum wage jobs. I've been in Santa Cruz a few decades and I have never seen people struggle with paying rent as I do today. Also, how are these farm workers supposed to afford a new Leopold EV to commute to their jobs in south county? What about the traffic? The EIR failed to look at the effects of a cottage license where most current cultivators can continue to work from home and be their own boss and set their own wages.

The EIR also failed to review the effects of grandfathering in the current good standing cultivators under the current 7.126 parcel sizes and setbacks. What if the county included a grandfather clause that issued a type 1C cottage license that maintained the 99 plant limit for those who are registered and currently in compliance but would otherwise need to relocate? The EIR has clearly stated that a more permissive ordinance would have less environmental impacts. Let's improve on that and bring in all of our current cultivators under a 1C cottage license option.

Sincerely,
Dave Faulkner