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To: [CannabisEIR <CannabisEIR@sanctacruzcounty.us>](mailto:CannabisEIR@sanctacruzcounty.us)
Date: 10/31/2017 7:01:25 PM
Subject: Concern on Cannabis DEIR findings

Dear Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors,

I am deeply saddened to be having to write again today, after having conveyed so many valid concerns about Cannabis farming in residential areas in the past (which directly and very negatively affected our family and our neighbors)..In our situation on a residential road in Bonny Doon, we were severely impacted by a neighbors illegal grow in 2014. Worse yet, after three desperate calls, we could not get police help to determine if that grow was illegal. Once we finally determined that it was (with help from someone in the county office who could help us to interpret the then on the books guidelines), we filed a complaint, and at time of receipt of that complaint and impending inspection, the owner began hiding evidence and loudly shouting that he had a gun (presumably so that we could hear).

All that we were trying to do was have some peace in our own home. Instead we were assaulted by 24/7 smell, lights at night, and people coming and going next door at all times of day and night. During that phase we were also in a drought and while we were frugally managing water and seeing redwood trees turn brown, these neighbors were aggressively pumping water from the same ground we access in order to keep their crop and profit healthy. Since when is a community resource like our groundwater allowed to be freely used for the profit of a few, at the cost of the other neighbors and the entire Santa Cruz Mountain Ecosystem?

We moved to this neighborhood when our daughter was 10 (2007), so that she would have a place to ride her bike and we could all walk our dogs safely and enjoy the clean mountain air. During the phase in 2014 when there was so much confusion on the regulations and a "run amok" attitude, there was at least one incident of Cannabis theft, and one middle of the night car crash through a neighbor's fence. Additionally one morning our then driving teenage daughter was stopped on our street, on the way to school and a deranged person demanded that she take them to a hospital. Thank goodness, she advised them that she would send help and drove on. She was shaken, but knew the right thing to do. As soon as she could she stopped and called me and my neighbors and I went looking for that person (and couldn't find them). On another occasion we had to call the police one morning for a domestic issue next door, where there we could hear a woman pleading not to be beaten (by the proprietor of the illegal Cannabis operation).

Since the change in regulations, these type of violent incidents have gone down greatly. However, the smell and water issues (which bring on fire issues) are still of grave concern. We had moved to this area and pay our 10k in taxes this year, to have the quality of life that the Santa Cruz Mountains promised, but quite honestly that quality of life is not being realized, and is seemingly not valued and that is alarming. Since then I've participated in some of the 2015 C4 hearings and learned even more about the potential damage to the Santa Cruz Mountains re: watershed and fisheries issues, and death of native animal population (coyote, mountain lion) from poisons used to protect crops from rat grazing.

Though the current phase has been less violent in our immediate area, the threat is still there, and potential new legislation could put us right back into that situation (and potentially far worse!). Currently, regardless of the other issues, we are seriously assaulted every day by smells that no one seems to feel any need to control. It's all over this area, and frankly insulting and assaulting to people who came here for the fresh air and sea breezes. Who gives people the right to ruin the environment for others and what local government condones it?

To "open the floodgates" to returning and even increasing the cultivation that wreaked havoc in our neighborhoods and the Santa Cruz Mountain Ecosystem in 2014 is reckless and inconsiderate. Though I have been less involved in the day to day negotiations since 2015 (having a full time job, and family to care for) I am in touch through the information passed on by my valued Santa Cruz Community residents who have remained engaged and taken it on themselves at the cost of their own time to keep up with proceedings and keep everyone informed. I fully agree with my neighbors that the false premises and weak approach of this DEIR threatens to undermine the hard-fought progress that had been made in this county towards a compromise policy that went a very long way towards accommodating the interests of the cannabis growers, while providing a basic level of protection for the community. Acting on the findings of this DEIR would be a huge mistake, and would, I believe fundamentally undermine the trust of many in the community in the ability of our local government to provide the leadership we need on this issue. There is a way forward that allows the cannabis industry to operate and even thrive in this county—without jeopardizing so much of our local natural resources and neighborhood health and safety; **but it is not expressed or to be found in the conclusion of this DEIR which must be rejected and replaced.**

Sincerely,

Dr. Leslie Bebout
