



Humboldt County Farm Bureau

5601 So. Broadway, Eureka, CA 95503
Serving Agriculture Since 1913

April 9, 2015

State Water Resources Control Board
c/o Jeanine Townsend, Clerk to the State Water Board
P.O. Box 100,
Sacramento, CA 95812-2000



Re: Comment Letter---North Coast Restoration Policy

Honorable Members of the Board:

This letter is being submitted in behalf of the Humboldt County Farm Bureau. We represent hundreds of agricultural and timberland property owners throughout Humboldt County. We are exceptionally concerned about the proposed amendment that relates to the temperature control provisions (which appear to be based on the exceptionally vague term 'site potential shade'). Further, we are greatly concerned about the lack of the environmental document's 'analysis' of the potential impact of the policy as it concerns Agricultural and Forest Lands and the absence of any measures to mitigate the anticipated conversion of those lands, especially prime and highly productive agricultural lands.

The impacts section of the environmental document acknowledges the conversion of prime agricultural lands. It is noted that the lands for Humboldt County have not yet been mapped by the State. This absence of consideration is a major omission as it concerns our County. Further, the 'analysis' dismisses the importance of the conversions by indicating the policy 'would only effect a very narrow band of land on either side of the watercourse'.

This 'analysis' does not address the additional lands (the 'narrow band') that will be converted to another use or reduced in productivity owing to an increase in the shading.

In addition, the universal application of the proposed policy makes no sense as it concerns its potential value along many of the rivers in the County. For example, within the lower Eel River, the river channel is hundreds of yards wide and the river meanders within this channel at varying distances. The sunlight will not be controlled through the regulation of 'site potential shade' applied through regulation by the Board. It makes little sense in those stream or river valleys wherein the mountains control the 'discharge' of the shade to the water, not the riparian vegetation.

No mitigation is proposed to offset or lessen the effects of the policy on the conversion of the highly productive/and prime agricultural lands to other uses.

The 'settings' section of the environmental document (Sec 8.10-Land Use and Planning) indicates that the intent of the application of the proposed policy is to not result in the interference with any Land Use Plan, policy, or regulation of another agency.

The County of Humboldt has Land Use Plans, policies and other regulations that address streamside management areas and their related setbacks.

In order to ensure that the intent of the Section 8.10 is carried out, it is requested that you consider the following:

Mitigation Measure: This policy is not applicable within those land use jurisdictions which have adopted streamside setbacks within the locally adopted General Plan, policies or other regulations.

Through the adoption of this mitigation measure, the proposed policy would not result in conflicts with the plans, policies or regulations of the County as intended.

In addition, the mitigation measure would serve to reduce or eliminate regulatory duplication or confusion.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter and the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Andy Albin

Andy Albin

President,

Humboldt County Farm Bureau