



MENDOCINO MESSAGE

Employers Council of Mendocino County
Winter, 2006

- If Jackson Demonstration State Forest is allowed to harvest timber again, it will create 500 good paying jobs.
- The County is reorganizing its "Advance Planning" process aiming to complete several projects that have been delayed for years.
- Two "buzz words" flying around these days are "Smart Growth" and the "Precautionary Principle"
- Ukiah City Hall will soon be open all business days, and will no longer close every other Friday.



Message from Director Mike Anderson

I serve on the Employers Council's Board of Directors in large part to convey the realities of our County's timber industry. My family has been working in the industry here since the 1920's! We've been on the roller coaster ride of this industry's fate for decades.

I've seen major changes in forestry and timber harvest practices over the years. I wish everyone could see first hand the way we protect the streams, selectively harvest, preserve habitat. This is the real legacy of our industry.

But I've also seen what has happened to our workers - the misery of no longer being able to provide living wages for their families.

Times, values and practices change. But one thing hasn't - humanity's appetite for lumber.

Why is timber harvesting shut down in Jackson Demonstration State Forest where we practice some of the most advanced forestry in the world, and drive logging to far-away pristine forests in far more delicate environments, using practices no one would even consider here.

Are we going to sustainably harvest trees from Jackson or not? Jackson has been at the forefront of forestry research and education. Hundreds of timber workers can have good living wage jobs. Hundreds of thousands of timber tax dollars would flow to the County. And Jackson's volume is essential to maintain a lumber industry in this County.

We're at a crossroads—will timber remain a vital part of our County's economic mix? We hope you'll agree that we need to get back to work in Jackson - always learning how to better harvest timber, create jobs, and maintain the environment.

Mike Anderson

Ukiah Fridays

After the first Ukiah Sales Tax Measure failed some time ago during the city's hard budget times, the City Council decided to close City Hall every other Friday as a cost saving measure. Full time city employees still worked 80 hours over two weeks, but put in 9 working days instead of 10. Unfortunately ECMC received numerous reports from members that this policy had cost them time and money.

ECMC partnered with the Ukiah Chamber of Commerce and North Coast Builders Exchange to survey 413 member businesses; 25% returned the survey. Slightly more than half prefer City Hall be open all business Fridays. One third reported direct inconvenience, some quite costly, caused by the policy.

Although businesses across the spectrum of industries reported problems, clearly construction and real estate firms experienced the most difficulties.

In response to our request, the Ukiah City Council discussed the Friday closing policy. The Council directed the City Manager to develop a plan to be open all business days. After review, the Council approved Management's plan to be open from 7:30 AM to 5:00 PM all normal business days. These new hours should soon be implemented.

New County Planning Organization

As described on the next page, several factors have merged to create a near "Perfect Storm" in Mendocino County Planning. One is the apparent inability to complete several important "advance planning" projects. New CEO John Ball's office identified 2 key problems regarding the Planning Department: a) the Department has 5 open positions and has had difficulty filling them; b) the mix of both long-term "advance planning" and immediate building code compliance duties has resulted in short-term duties "crowding out" work on long-term goals.

The CEO office outlined 5 possible approaches. Of these the Executive Office advocated the establishment of a "Free Standing Advance Planning Team". While the County Board of Supervisors has not finalized this arrangement, they will probably do so soon.

The team is not a new department, but its duties are separate from the current Planning Department. Six full-time equivalent employees will be in the team with current Planning Department head Ray Hall leading the team. The team will coordinate with several other departments.

The Team's two key draft objectives are to complete the Ukiah Valley Area Plan by 12/31/07 and the Update to the County's General Plan by 11/30/08. The Team will probably also tackle the Mendocino Town Plan and the Local Coastal Plan as well.

A "PERFECT STORM" IN MENDOCINO COUNTY PLANNING

Controversial development proposals, growing development pressure, frustrations about the Ukiah Valley Area Plan (UVAP) and General Plan, and concerns about the direction and capacity of the County Planning Department are creating a "Perfect Storm" in Mendocino County Planning. In this context several groups are promoting two concepts—"Smart Growth" and the "Precautionary Principle".

The Employers Council believes those who are interested in the health of our local economy must take these issues seriously. This article is merely a brief intro. See our website www.ecmconline.com for a more complete analysis and information sources.

The Precautionary Principle

According to *Wikipedia*, an online encyclopedia, "*the Precautionary Principle, a phrase first used in English circa 1988, is the idea that if the consequences of an action are unknown, but are judged to have some potential for major or irreversible negative consequences, then it is better to avoid that action.*"

This Principle developed in Germany after WWI. It appeared in international treaties in 1982. A number of governments have adopted various applications, especially in Europe. The concept mostly applies to government actions, not private sector; however that line is not firm.

Advocates: Organizations such as the Precautionary Principle Project, the Science & Environmental Health Network, and the Institute of Science in Society. A common statement: "*The precautionary principle is simply a statement that we should not go ahead with a new technology, or persist with an old one, unless we are convinced it is safe.*"

Critics: Other organizations, such as the Reason Institute, Heritage Foundation, and Extropy Institute, challenge the Principle. A common thought - "*People's freedom to innovate technologically is highly valuable, even critical, to humanity. Risks and opportunities must be evaluated according to available science, not popular perception. Analysis must include the costs of the restrictions themselves and of lost opportunities. Measures must be proportionate to the probability and magnitude of impacts.*"

In Mendocino County: A year or so ago the Mendocino Partnership for the Precautionary Principle was organized. The Partnership's leadership includes a number of City and County officials and leaders of local environmental and public health advocacy organizations.

In mid-2005 the Mendocino County Public Health Advisory Board requested that the County study the adoption of the Precautionary Principle. In Sept. 2005 the Board of Supervisors assigned a committee to study the issue.

The BOS Ad Hoc Committee is working on language for a proposed ordinance based on one adopted by the City and County of San Francisco. This issue is likely to come back before the full BOS this spring.

Smart Growth

"Smart Growth" arose from 1990s anti-sprawl efforts in Maryland and Colorado. Recent development in downtown Windsor is the best regional example of "Smart Growth".

Advocates: Smart Growth is supported by a much wider range of organizations, including American Planning Association, Smart Growth Network, dozens of states and cities, and US EPA. A common statement—" *The alternative to sprawl isn't a halt to growth. The population of the United States is expected to increase by 50 percent in the first half of the 21st century. Those additional 130 million people will need places to live, work, shop, and play. The question is not whether we will build new homes, offices, shops and movie theatres to accommodate them, but where we will build them and how.*"

Principles of Smart Growth are "mixed land use, compact building design, range of housing in developments, walkable neighborhoods, communities with a strong sense of 'place', preserve open space/farmland/etc, infill development in existing communities, variety of transportation, help developers by simplifying requirements, development driven by community vision."

Critics: Same organizations that criticize the Precautionary Principle, plus numerous transportation, development, population growth control organizations. Critics come from several different angles. Common themes— *Smart Growth worsens problems it intendeds to solve (higher housing costs, traffic congestion, etc); Smart Growthers want to command others how to live; market-oriented policies give people freedom to choose; people prefer not to be crowded; population growth especially from immigration (not land use policy) is the major driver of sprawl; people live in suburbs because they want to.*

In Mendocino County: The Ukiah Smart Growth Coalition, organized a year ago, was energized by its fight against the Ryder Homes Hop Kiln project. USGC is deeply involved in the Ukiah Valley Area Plan. Several Economic Localization groups around the County support Smart Growth. The County, Fort Bragg and Ukiah Planning Departments have co-sponsored Smart Growth seminars. Many local officials are on record supporting Smart Growth.

Observations: The term is Smart **Growth**, not No Growth. Many Smart Growth advocates believe that growth is going to happen; the question for them is "what kind of growth?". Many main stream organizations, developers and political leaders support Smart Growth. However, there is a range of thought nationally in the Smart Growth "movement" that may not yet have been developed in Mendocino County. For example, there is a range of opinion among Smart Growth advocates nationally whether Smart Growth should be imposed through ordinances or be required to stand the test of the market.



JACKSON DEMONSTRATION STATE FOREST (JDSF)

Jackson Demonstration State Forest's Original Mission

In 1946 the state legislature recognized the need for change after a century of intense logging. The future required that *"desirable cutover forest lands ... be made fully productive and ... reforestation of such lands is a necessary measure."* Its strategy was to acquire 40,000 acres of cutover forest for research and to demonstrate to private forest owners how to *"achieve maximum sustained production of high quality forest products while giving consideration to values relating to recreation, watershed, wildlife, range and forage, fisheries and aesthetic enjoyment."* When the State acquired JDSF between Fort Bragg and Willits in 1947, it was so heavily cut it was a "moonscape". Because of CDF's pursuit of these goals it's now a healthy forest.

But conditions and people's views evolve. The situation in 1946 was very different from today. It's appropriate, and unavoidable, to again discuss what JDSF's mission and operations should be.

In 2001 a local group sued the California Department of Forestry (CDF) claiming that its Forestry Plan was outdated; the court agreed and timber harvests were stopped. CDF recently issued another Plan and Draft EIR for public comment. Seven management schemes ("A" through "F" with 2 "C's") are defined, from logging "like it used to be" to no logging at all. On 2/7 the County Board of Supervisors voted 3 for "D", 2 for "C1". C1 is the EIR's "preferred alternative".

What's the Difference: Alternatives "C1" v. "D"?

The current Draft EIR (see our website www.ecmconline.com.) is about 1500 pages. It's not possible to convey all the details in this short article. The main difference is what the mission of JDSF should be. There are some significant operational differences, but there are also many aspects where there is little if any difference between the two.

The Big Difference in Goals of "C1" and "D"

Both alternatives significantly elevate the importance of natural forest ecosystems. But while C1 greatly increases attention to ecological and recreational purposes, its focus is to learn how to achieve high levels of timber production within a sustainable healthy forest ecosystem. In contrast, whereas D allows significant volumes of timber to be harvested, it subordinates production to recreational uses and the restoration of a primarily "natural" forest.

Operational Differences

There are 3 "hot" issues - clear cutting, herbicides, and old growth. Both alternatives move in the same direction. Very limited clear cutting is allowed in C1 only for research and educational purposes. D prohibits clear cutting. C1 reduces herbicide use but allows it especially for control of invasive species. D almost totally prohibits their use. And whereas C1

sets aside all the remaining old growth groves, in addition D would prohibit cutting any tree more than 150 years old regardless of where it is.

The hot button issues would not impact as many acres as other provisions that aren't much debated. One example is the "buffer zones" along streams. Once again, both increase protections but D is far more restrictive.

The Employers Council Supports Alternative C1

We believe Management Alternative C1 defined in the Draft EIR is a fair compromise. It allows timber harvests and the continuance of JDSF's research and education mission. It sets up significant environmental protections and provides for public enjoyment of the woods.

No part of our county has been more harmed over the past 30 years than timber worker families. How can we in good conscience deny them jobs? We need to rebuild our economic base. We have only a few economic advantages in the global economy; growing redwoods clearly is one. California was self-sufficient in lumber 50 years ago. Today we import 80% of the 8 billion board feet we use. We use more Canadian lumber than our own, where 90% is clear-cut and 2/3 from old growth. Not producing lumber in Jackson forces clear cuts in old growth Canadian forest. Does that make sense? But here's the kicker ...

Sustainable Forestry in a 14 Billion Person World

State leaders in 1946 saw the need to learn and demonstrate how to restore heavily cut-over forests to provide future lumber. But today we're in a different world. In 1946 the world had 2.3 billion people. Today it's 6.5 billion. Billions are rapidly moving from third to first world consumer patterns in an increasingly global economy. It took 8000 years to cut down the first 25% of the world's forests. The second 25% went in the last 50 years. Cut and run timber operations in third world countries threaten to remove all the world's lowland tropical forests in the next 50 years. Science has irrefutably shown that all of us are in big trouble without the world's forests. And the UN expects a total world population of 9.5 to 14 billion in 95 years.

Does that argue JDSF should be primarily a park? A park won't show us how to provide lumber to meet future demand while maintaining the health of forest ecosystems and the planet.

Jared Diamond in his recent excellent book *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed* presents this challenge. In his worst-case scenario all the world's forests outside heavily protected parks will be destroyed in this century. The best case is we learn how to provide the world's timber needs from 20% of its forests. The best case scenario is precisely what JDSF should be about. It is 1946's mission updated for our time.





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**County Planning and
 Jackson Demonstration State Forest**



Two huge issues are before our community right now. One, the future of *Jackson Demonstration State Forest* (JDSF), has been a sore point for years. Our County Board of Supervisors is split 3 - 2 about how to proceed. The Employers Council comes down squarely on the side of maintaining JDSF's core mission—learning how to produce lumber in a drastically different and challenging future.

Another is the direction, organization and philosophy of *County Planning*. Two new issues are "*Smart Growth*" and the "*Precautionary Principle*".

These are new issues in our County; we haven't yet taken a position on them. However, the business community and others interested in the vitality of our local economy need to *take Smart Growth and the Precautionary Principle seriously*, learn about them, discuss them, and be a part of the public debate. They could have major impacts on our ability to help create and maintain a prosperous community.

Inside are very brief introductions to these concepts. More details are available at our website -

ecmconline.com



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