

Forest Protection talking points.

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We urge the strongest protections for Sonoma County's forests. Once forests are removed, they are lost forever.

The negative economic, biological, and environmental effects from conversion of forest to agricultural uses are extensive.

The best option proposal discussed is Option 3. Please support Option 3 and help protect 194,000 acres of forest from clearcutting and permanent conversion to industrial agriculture.

Forests are home to more than one half of the Earth's species and the clearing and destructive logging of forests is the single greatest cause of species jeopardy worldwide.

Forests help slow global warming by storing and sequestering carbon. Forests are sources of vital wood products. They help regulate local and regional rainfall. Forests are crucial sources of food, medicine, clean drinking water, and immense recreational, aesthetic, and spiritual benefits for millions of people

Under current trajectories, most of the world's remaining large tracts of intact, biodiversity-rich forests -- from the Amazon Basin and Indonesia to Maine and Alaska -- will be gone by mid-century.

Any County ordinance will effect an area of land (primarily the Gualala watershed) much of which has already been seriously overlogged, and which is already listed by Federal and State agencies for both temperature and sediment impairments, and which badly needs to recover.

Conversion of forest to vineyards is an increasing problem in Sonoma County, and can potentially effect 194,000 acres of forest.

Corporate interests from outside the county and the country are targeting our woodlands for destruction. One proposal already on the books calls for permanent loss of trees on up to 1,900 acres for conversion to vineyards.

"The acreage of conversion requests currently pending at CDF in 2005 is greater than all the conversions approved over the last decade." -- PRMD

County Staff's Option 5 proposal (already rejected by the Planning Commission) provides insufficient protections, and will be impossible for the County to monitor effectively.

'No Net Loss' doesn't add up. 'No Net Loss' is a misnomer and should more accurately be labeled 'No Net Protection'.

Doing the math, Option 5 could permit the clearcutting and permanent loss of one third of our forestland. As bad as that is, it gets worse, because we'd end up with a sort of Swiss cheese configuration of fragmented forest (an acre here, an acre there) that would result in even greater habitat fragmentation.

The Citizen's Advisory Committee recommended that the County implement measures to ensure that habitat fragmentation would not occur.

Biologists and ecologists agree that conversion of forest to intensive agriculture causes fundamental changes in ecological and physical processes that maintain wildlife and the vital qualities of water, land, and air.

An acre of forest and habitat lost, is an acre lost

Conversion of forests to intensive agriculture causes fundamental changes in ecological and physical processes that maintain the quality of water, land, and air. These include: a) disruption of wildlife corridors and habitat fragmentation b) groundwater depletion c) downstream flooding d) pollution to fresh water sources caused by pesticides/herbicides, fertilizer, and sedimentation e) sub-surface hydrologic flow changes f) water diversions g) re-contouring of slopes h) deep soil disruptions i) increased peak flows in streams, causing stream bank failure and mass wasting of land j) microclimate changes affecting plants and animals k) endangered species are harmed and their habitat depleted l) aesthetic impacts m) increased infrastructure needs and costs n) the contribution of this deforestation to global warming.

Future generations should never have to ask: "Why is Sonoma County part of the Redwood Empire?"