

Hello, this is Tom Cookman with a Community Comment.

How many acres of redwood trees do we need protected? When do we say enough is enough? Once Charles Hurwitz, Humboldt County's largest private employer, was run out of town, the extreme environmentalists have turned the focus of their attention on The Green Diamond Resource Company, and specifically the 7,500 acre Mckay Tract of redwood trees just east of Eureka between Redwood Acres and Cutten. This land was scheduled to be developed into residential housing. This development would've provided much needed housing and created hundreds of high paying construction jobs. Unfortunately, we are looking to convert this land into another Community Forest. This land will be turned over to the public and WE will have to spend tax dollars, that we don't have, to maintain a piece of property that, if developed, would've created millions of tax dollars every single year. The net result will be that our local economy will suffer. Local governments will be required to spend their budgets further into the red maintaining this new Community Forest and our schools will suffer further loses in revenue because this land will not be developed. If there were 2,000 homes built on this property at an average cost of \$250,000 each, that would generate \$2,500 in property tax revenue per home every single year. This alone would add FIVE MILLION DOLLARS a year to the Humboldt County coffers. If each home averaged one child, this would add 2,000 more students to our local schools. With a class size of 20 students we would have to hire 100 more teachers along with aides, receptionists and custodial staff. We could actually open a school instead of closing them down. This development would create jobs in every sector of our economy from police and fire personnel to lawn services, and the list would go on and on. Instead we will be one

step closer to converting Humboldt County into one big land preserve. Humboldt County is just a few mill closures away from becoming Del Norte County's twin. Del Norte County is one of the most productive timber growing regions in the United States and yet, they do not have one single lumber mill. This environmentalist agenda goes back to when they were instrumental in the creation of Redwood National Park. All these redwood parks were supposed to be a major tourist attraction. This hasn't worked out as planned. Our tourist industry declines every year because we live in a very expensive place to visit. Our fuel prices are not just high, they are the most expensive prices in the continental United States. Adding to this problem, in the name of cleaner air, we've added so many additives to our fuel that our miles per gallon decreases as much as 20% compared to fuel purchased in other states. Our motels and restaurants are as expensive as many metropolitan areas. Then if you can overcome these obstacles, you drive into Eureka and you see more homeless and druggies per capita than anywhere else I've ever visited. You get out of your car in Old Town and you worry about the safety of your vehicle and have to tell numerous Pan Handlers that you don't have any extra money for them. If you have a giving heart, you might end up giving away your entire vacation budget just walking around Eureka. Bottom line, we need another Community Forest like we need a hole in the head. There are already too many places amongst the majestic redwoods that our residents can roll a big fat one, sit down, light up and wait for their welfare check to come in.

This has been Tom Cookman with a Community Comment