

Hi, Fred Nelson for Community Comment,

I guess the question of retaining or removing the billboards along Highway 101 between Eureka and Arcata is still unsettled. To some, the signs are an unattractive nuisance and block views of the northern section of Humboldt Bay. Have you ever tried to view North Bay while driving by the row of Eucalyptus trees? Should the trees be removed? Cal Trans does a good job of keeping the trees trimmed so they are not losing limbs into the traffic lanes on a windy or stormy day. In fact, they serve as a windbreak for the passing motorist. Back to the billboards: I stated two reasons why the signs are not acceptable to some people; they are not attractive and block views. Now let's look at the positive side. The billboards are located on someone's property so the advertising company, that owns the signs, is paying rent to the landowner. The advertising company, in turn, rents the sign space to a business, or organization, who would like its services to be known to the passing motorist. All this equates to multiple exchanges of monies plus buyers satisfaction. Don't tell me that these money exchanges are not part of the local economy. The signs do not appear to be an environmental hazard nor do they seem to be a traffic hazard as the subject matter posted, at least on our local billboards, does not contain any type of objectionable material as seen in other parts of the nation. The structures don't seem to be a threat to wildlife. I have talked with friends who travel the 101 corridor on a daily basis and they have witnessed the bill board structures used as vantage points for raptors that perch on high in their quest for food, in fact one person told me of his witnessing a Bald Eagle perched on one of the signs. There are also reports of birds nesting on or beneath some of the support beams. To those of you who think that the billboards should be removed: Speak your piece and follow your convictions in a legal manner. Don't support those who sneak around in the middle of the night and destroy something that is not theirs. No problem is resolved through criminality. If your neighbor has a tree that blocks your view do you sneak over while he is gone and cut his tree down? That is no different than what is happening along the 101 Corridor. There also seems to be a question about the ownership of some of the tidewater land where the billboards are located. If the ownership of the land is in question, to whom does the advertising company send the rent? If views of the North Bay are so important, entertain the thought of a Cal Trans vantage point being built in the Brae-cut area. Parking and viewing is so much safer than "rubbernecking".

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