



# COUNTY OF MENDOCINO

## 2014 STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM

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MENDOCINO COUNTY  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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**CARRE BROWN**  
FIRST DISTRICT

**JOHN McCOWEN**  
SECOND DISTRICT

**JOHN PINCHES**  
THIRD DISTRICT

**DAN GJERDE**  
FOURTH DISTRICT

**DAN HAMBURG**  
FIFTH DISTRICT

THE MENDOCINO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' MISSION IS TO  
CREATE AND MAINTAIN A RESPONSIVE AND RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT  
THAT ENHANCES THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF THE PEOPLE OF MENDOCINO COUNTY

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ADOPTED BY THE MENDOCINO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
DECEMBER 16, 2013

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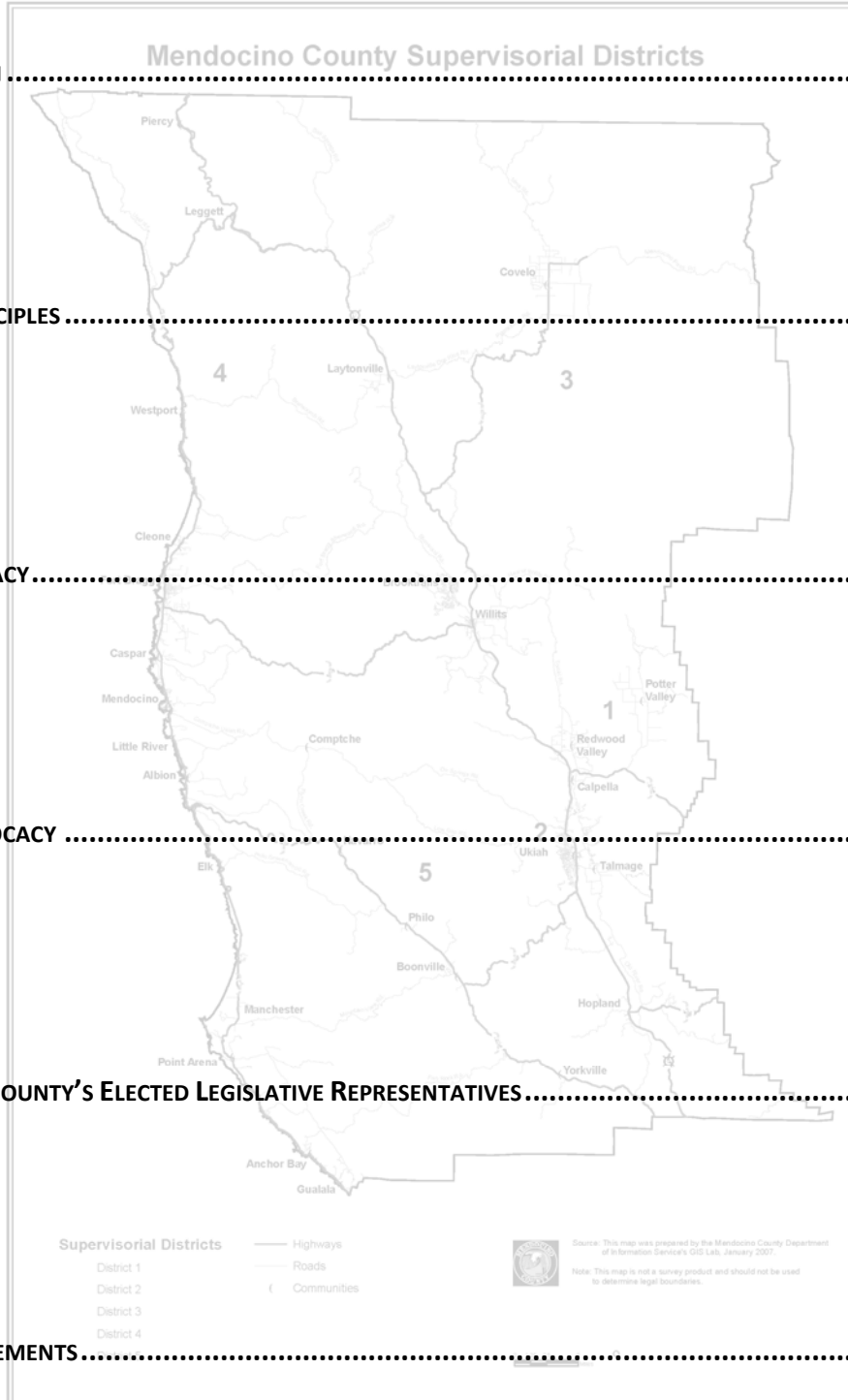
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### RESOURCES AND USEFUL WEBSITES:

CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE ([WWW.SENATE.CA.GOV](http://WWW.SENATE.CA.GOV)) | CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLY ([WWW.ASSEMBLY.CA.GOV](http://WWW.ASSEMBLY.CA.GOV))

U.S. SENATE ([WWW.SENATE.GOV](http://WWW.SENATE.GOV)) | U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ([WWW.HOUSE.GOV](http://WWW.HOUSE.GOV))

CSAC ([WWW.CSAC.COUNTIES.ORG](http://WWW.CSAC.COUNTIES.ORG)) | NACo ([WWW.NACO.ORG](http://WWW.NACO.ORG))

MENDOCINO COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICE ([WWW.CO.MENDOCINO.CA.US/administration/](http://WWW.CO.MENDOCINO.CA.US/administration/))

# INTRODUCTION

## 2014 MENDOCINO COUNTY LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM

Mendocino County, California, is a small rural northern California coastal county incorporated in 1850 (General Law county), covering over 3,500 square miles of mountainous terrain, scenic ocean front property, rich agriculture lands, and abundant natural resources.

Mendocino County has a population of 87,841, 1,018 miles of County maintained roads, four incorporated cities and numerous small towns, villages, and communities. The County is represented by five non-partisan elected members comprising the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors.

The county derived its name from Cape Mendocino which was probably named in honor of either Antonio de Mendoza, Viceroy of New Spain, 1535-1542 (who sent the Juan Cabrillo Expedition to this coast in 1542), or Lorenzo Suarez de Mendoza, Viceroy from 1580 to 1583. Mendocino is an adjective form of the family name of Mendoza.

Pursuant to County Policy No. 19, the Board of Supervisors adopts an annual Legislative Platform reflecting the County priorities for legislative advocacy, state and federal funding, and issues of interest to local government.

In development of the 2014 Legislative Platform, the Board formed an Ad-Hoc Committee, comprised of Supervisor Carre Brown and Supervisor Dan Gjerde, to work with County Department Heads and Executive Office staff in developing a framework of issues for Board consideration.

In shaping this year's platform, the Ad-Hoc Committee's recommendations to the Board, reflect: The continued economic downturn impacting all levels of governmental programs, services, and funding; program and regulatory reform resulting from implementation of the Affordable Care Act in 2014; ongoing federal deficit-reduction measures; the continuing congressional earmark moratorium; and anticipated reform measures at the local, state, and national level.

On December 16, 2013, the Board unanimously adopted the 2014 Legislative Platform reflecting the County's legislative priorities, principles, and policies for the upcoming legislative cycle. In adopting an annual legislative advocacy platform, the Board of Supervisors strives to enhance the quality of life in Mendocino County through effective state and federal legislation.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

In adopting this year's platform, the Board wishes to acknowledge the collaborative work of our elected representatives' local district staff: Ms. Heidi Dickerson, District Representative, Congressman Jared Huffman; Ms. Ruth Valenzuela, District Representative, Assemblymember Wesley Chesbro; and Mr. Jeff Tyrrell, District Representative, State Senator Noreen Evans.

(References: U.S. Census Bureau; Legislative Analyst's Office; Department of Finance; California Department of Food and Agriculture)



# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

## 2014 MENDOCINO COUNTY LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM

In adopting this year's legislative platform, the following serve as Mendocino County's guiding principles for legislative advocacy:

- Local control
- Rural county needs, services, challenges
- Preservation/protection of funding for critical services
- Regulatory relief/regulatory reform
- Conservation and preservation of the county's natural resources
- Economic development

### **LOCAL CONTROL**

As the nation and the State grapple with revenue shortfalls and governmental restructuring, it is critical that every effort to support and promote local control is fully embraced, positioning the County to exercise maximum flexibility in carrying out its policy and program mandates.

### **RURAL COUNTY NEEDS, SERVICES, CHALLENGES**

Rural counties' needs are distinctly different from our larger urban and suburban counterparts throughout the State. Advocacy to support the unique needs of our rural communities including fiscal, programmatic, and regulatory consideration is of utmost importance.

### **PRESERVATION/PROTECTION OF FUNDING FOR CRITICAL SERVICES**

At a time when funding for local government is diminishing, it is more important than ever to continue to receive State and federal funding to preserve core services. This is especially critical given the State's impending implementation of health care reform and federal deficit reduction measures.

The County will continue to advocate for fundamental reforms to the system of governance in California to better serve the people of Mendocino County.

### **REGULATORY RELIEF/REGULATORY REFORM**

As local government faces reduced resources to carry out myriad programs and services, we join other California counties in advocating for greater flexibility and relief from over-regulation, relief from unfunded state mandates, and opposition to the further degradation of state funding for County programs. Continued support of CSAC and RCRC policy positions will benefit local government in general, and Mendocino County in particular.

### **CONSERVATION AND PRESERVATION OF THE COUNTY'S NATURAL RESOURCES**

Mendocino County supports efforts to conserve and preserve the county's natural resources to help restore its fisheries, maintain healthy forests, and ensure agriculture is preserved for future generations.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Promotion of economic development opportunities suitable to our rural community's unique character through business development.

# STATE ADVOCACY

## 2014 MENDOCINO COUNTY LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM

### ELECTED STATE REPRESENTATIVES:

Assemblymember Wesley Chesbro, 2<sup>nd</sup> Assembly District  
Senator Noreen Evans, 2nd Senate District

### PRIORITIES FOR STATE ADVOCACY:

#### PROTECTION OF COUNTY FUNDING STREAMS ASSOCIATED WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT (ACA) IN CALIFORNIA

In 2014, the Affordable Care Act (ACA) will be implemented in California. It is vital that local government funding streams reflect equitable distribution formulas to serve our rural constituents. Adequate funding to sustain health care reform measures is one of the County's priorities for State advocacy.

#### EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF STATE FUNDING AS A RESULT OF PROGRAMMATIC REALIGNMENT

In 2011, the Legislature and the Brown Administration enacted a comprehensive realignment of criminal justice programs and services to counties as well as realigned the funding of a variety of health and human services programs. The realigning of the health and human services programs started in the beginning of the 2011-12 fiscal year while the criminal justice realignment – via AB 109 – took effect on October 1, 2011.

The County supports local flexibility in the administration and implementation of programs funded by realignment. We believe that the State should assume cost increases associated with state-imposed program changes and expansions, as well as federal maintenance of effort mandates. Likewise, we oppose State and/or federal funding reductions that shift responsibility for services, administration or fiscal support to rural counties.

#### SUPPORT RESPONSIBLE CEQA REFORM

Since its passage in 1970, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) has required project proponents and public agencies to analyze, disclose, and mitigate the significant impacts of changes in the environment. The County supports the protection and preservation of the community's environmental resources. However, over the decades, CEQA has grown increasingly complex and onerous, and some procedural and minor provisions of the law are often used by opponents as a means to block projects that would otherwise serve to improve environmental conditions or provide a clear benefit to the community. In the 2013 legislative season, there were nearly 30 CEQA bills introduced—one of which passed. The County will continue to support responsible CEQA legislation that would improve and streamline implementation and the intent of the law.

#### PROMOTION OF RURAL BROADBAND

Collaborate with the Broadband Alliance of Mendocino County (BAMC) to build a robust county fiber backbone infrastructure and advocate expanding affordable broadband access to underserved homes, businesses, schools, public safety facilities, and other institutions throughout Mendocino County. Areas of advocacy may include: Universal right to service which includes maintaining landline connections to those areas without cellular coverage, funding broadband deployment, adequate funding of the California Advanced Services Fund (CASF) for the broadband grant program, and requiring accurate deployment data.

**SUPPORT RESTORATION OF  
WILLIAMSON ACT SUBVENTION**

Continue to work with other northern California counties to identify and meet regional needs using a comprehensive, integrated approach to expand broadband infrastructure in our communities.

The State of California has eliminated funding for the Williamson Act (the California Land Conservation Act). Mendocino County, like most other rural counties, is dependent on State funding to offset the loss of property tax revenue to the County. This program has been hugely beneficial to our agricultural county.

In 2011, the Legislature enacted AB 1265, which allows eligible counties to offset a portion of the loss in subvention funds. AB 1265 allows counties to implement contracts that are ten percent shorter in exchange for a ten percent reduction in property tax relief to the landowner. AB 1265 will sunset on January 1, 2016. On November 12, 2013, the Board of Supervisors voted to continue the implementation of AB 1265 within Mendocino County for fiscal year 2013-2014. The County will continue to advocate for further relief of foregone revenues to preserve and support our agricultural resources. This includes restoration of State subvention funding and/or support for legislation to continue allowances of AB 1265 beyond the sunset date.

**SUPPORT FUNDING  
OPPORTUNITIES THAT PROVIDE  
FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION  
(INCLUDING STATE PARKS)  
ENCOURAGING HEALTHY  
LIFESTYLES AND UTILIZATION OF  
OUR NATURAL RESOURCES**

Outdoor recreational opportunities are a critical component to a healthy and vibrant community. The County will be looking for opportunities to increase the accessibility and use of the outdoors and will support legislation and funding opportunities that enhance outdoor recreational activities and access that will also positively impact Mendocino County's economy.

Since the 2011 proposed closure of 70 California State Parks, more than 10% of which are located in Mendocino County, legislation has been enacted to implement measures to achieve sustainable parks funding, along with innovative operational agreements to protect these historic resources. The County will continue to support measures to sustain our State parks for the continued enjoyment of visitors and local residents alike. Closure of these parks would result in a significant negative economic impact on our County as tourism is one of our most important economic drivers.

**SUPPORT FOR COLLECTION OF  
INTERNET SALES TAX  
(E-COMMERCE)**

Significant revenues are lost to cities and counties from the lack of a uniform sales tax policy for internet sales. In 2012 the State Legislature granted a one-year deferral on the collection of sales tax from out of state internet retailers while advocating for a uniform approach through federal legislation. (*See the Federal Platform Sales Tax update.*) The County should continue an effort at a State level given the one-year deferral period has expired.

**ENCOURAGE EFFORTS TO  
COMBAT ILLEGAL TRESPASS  
(MARIJUANA CULTIVATION)  
ON PUBLIC AND PRIVATE LANDS**

Instances of illegal trespass and violent crimes on both public and private lands place our residents, visitors, and law enforcement officers at risk. The County supports measures to combat the impacts of these illegal activities within Mendocino County. The County will advocate for solutions to stem illegal marijuana cultivation in all areas of the county by working with private property owners, the U.S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the California State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection, the California Department of Parks and Recreation, and other regulatory entities to ameliorate this problem.

**SUPPORT THE REPEAL OR  
MODIFICATION OF FEDERAL  
PROHIBITION OF MARIJUANA**

The County also supports fines that cover the cost of site clean-up and restoration to mitigate for the impacts to the land, water quality and quantity. On September 19, 2012, the Legislature enacted AB 2284, which authorizes a police officer to stop a vehicle hauling agricultural irrigation supplies on a dirt road, and also adds new civil penalties for polluting water supplies, dumping trash, or making illegal streambed alterations. The Board of Supervisors authorized letters of support for this legislation, and will continue to support efforts to discourage the abuse of public lands and resources.

Inconsistencies in local, State, and Federal law create challenges within our public safety system network and criminal justice system. Mendocino County supports federal initiatives to either repeal or modify the federal prohibition of marijuana, and encourages federal recognition of state laws regulating medical marijuana. Mendocino County supports the principles of legalization, regulation, and taxation of marijuana pursuant to Board policy adopted June 5, 2007.

Mendocino County supports adequate funding to address illegal water diversion, water pollution, erosion, poisoning of wildlife, and other environmental damage associated with trespass marijuana growing operations.

**SUPPORT  
BIOMASS AND BIOCHAR  
UTILIZATION IN  
MENDOCINO COUNTY**

The County will support budgetary proposals, in addition to legislative and regulatory efforts, to enhance wildfire protection/restoration efforts and promote the use of biomass.

Excess woody biomass in Mendocino County forests increases vulnerability to catastrophic forest fire events, has negative impacts on forest habitat and health and impedes the growth of economically viable timber. Environmentally, economically and socially responsible biomass utilization can help restore the forest and provide well-paying restoration, transportation and processing jobs for a community that has been hampered by job losses due to the closure of sawmills and the overall decline of the timber industry. Biomass can be converted into a number of value added products including electricity, biodiesel, biochar, pellets and more. In most cases these products off-set the use of fossil fuels such as petroleum and coal. Energy created using biomass is considered to be carbon neutral by the EPA. If done in alignment with community values and ecological realities, biomass utilization can be part of a sustainable forest based economy in Mendocino County.

The Mendocino County Woody Biomass Working Group and Coastal Biomass Collaborative are working together to raise money to lay the groundwork for multiple small-scale biomass gasification power plants in the county. This initiative has become increasingly feasible due to new California legislation SB1122, which requires private power utilities to purchase 50MW of electricity from small-scale biomass power plants whose feedstock comes from high fire risk areas. The legislation provides monetary incentives for investors making construction and operation financially viable. Mendocino County needs upfront funds to complete four feasibility/ business plans at old mill sites throughout the county. The completion of these plans will make these sites investor ready. The realization of this initiative will help make a reality of the "restoration economy" where energy is produced locally, responsibly, sustainably, and



**OPPOSE HIGH SPEED RAIL  
UNTIL A DEDICATED FUNDING  
STREAM IS IDENTIFIED**

turns material that would otherwise be considered a fire hazard into a solution for 21st century problems like energy dependence, climate change, and the need for living wage jobs.

Mendocino County does not support transportation dollars normally allocated to rural areas redirected to high speed rail, therefore, the County is opposed to high speed rail until a dedicated funding stream is identified. In 2008, California voters approved Measure 1A, which authorized the State to sell over \$9 billion in bonds to partially fund the project. However, on November 25, 2013, a Sacramento Superior Court Judge decided to not validate the sale of the bonds, and that the State's plans no longer reflected the project's voter-approved requirements.

**ENCOURAGE LOCALLY-BASED  
MODELS FOR ENERGY DELIVERY  
(INCLUDING WIND, SOLAR,  
GEOTHERMAL)**

Mendocino County encourages development of locally-based models for energy delivery/energy independence including wind, solar, and geothermal energy. Local energy delivery can provide our constituents with alternative energy sources and more options.

The County will support efforts for Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) which allows cities and counties to aggregate the buying power of individual customers within a defined jurisdiction in order to secure alternative energy supply contracts. Currently, nearly one million Americans receive service from CCAs, including Marin County, and most recently, Sonoma County.

**SUPPORT RESPONSIBLE  
MITIGATION MEASURES FOR  
INDIAN GAMING ON TRIBAL  
LANDS AND FUNDING  
THROUGH THE INDIAN GAMING  
SPECIAL DISTRIBUTION FUND**

The county supports provisions for full mitigation of local impacts including infrastructure load and local law enforcement issues from gaming on tribal lands, negotiations of state-tribal gaming compacts, and development of additional policy on the issue of tribal intergovernmental affairs impacting local government.

We support mitigation measures provided through the Indian Gaming Special Distribution Fund or through a judicially enforceable agreement between local jurisdictions and tribes. The County supports full funding of local mitigation measures to provide much needed revenues to counties and local governments affected by tribal gaming.

**SUPPORT FUNDING/  
PROGRAM PRESERVATION**

Many programs are at risk with the anticipated loss of State and Federal funding. The Board supports efforts to sustain funding enabling continuation of the following programs for Mendocino County's constituents:

- Funding to support county fairgrounds and fair operations;
- Preservation/restoration of funding for school gardens projects;
- Funding for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Systems;
- Funding to support compliance with State agency requirements and mandates (MCRCD);
- Funding for fisheries restoration (MCRCD);
- Funding for State Water Resources Control Board and 9 regional boards to complete TMDL (MCRCD);
- HHS safety-net programs and regulations, including: CalFresh

**ENCOURAGE REGULATORY  
RELIEF/REFORM**

Categorical Eligibility; School Lunch Programs; Health Care Enrollment (inmates); Preventing Elder and Dependent Care Abuse; Fees and Charges for Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly; Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program; Drug Abuse Prevention and Safe Disposal Program; Childhood Vaccinations; and Child Welfare/Fatality Case notifications.

Given government downsizing at all levels, the Board supports efforts to achieve responsible regulatory relief in the following areas:

- Support to reform the Local Mandate (SB 90) reimbursement process;
- Amend California Fish and Wildlife Department regulations on Ranch for Wildlife program to allow noncontiguous parcels under the same ownership to submit one program plan, determine if program is being applied equally throughout the different regions within the State and assist local landowners not in the program to gain monetary relief from the State for damages caused as a result of the migrating Tule Elk overpopulation in Potter Valley;
- Greater flexibility and/or statutory relief for small counties to operate with more freedom from Conflict of Interest rules;
- New Option for Self-Help Counties to Fund Transportation: The County supports State legislation to provide Counties the option to place transportation-related sales tax measures on the ballot which would only take effect in the unincorporated areas of Counties. Cities already have the option to place transportation-related sales tax measures on the ballot. Only city residents have the right to vote on those measures. Counties should have the same option, with only residents of the unincorporated area of a County voting on the measure, in cases where the tax measure is only effective outside of the cities;
- Inclusion of Mendocino County in the Forest Fire Prevention Exemption (AB744). In an effort to allow private property owners the option to thin their forest stands to help avert catastrophic wildfires, to have healthier forests, and to have faster maturing forests, the Mendocino BOS appeals to Assembly Member Chesbro to seek the inclusion of Mendocino County into the Forest Fire Prevention Pilot Project Exemption (AB 744);
- Relief for rural fire districts: The population of Mendocino County is highly rural and dependent upon voluntary associations that provide basic emergency services. These volunteer fire districts provide services to residents, tourists, and are often the first responders to accidents that occur on the vast rural stretches of highway that connect Mendocino County to the north, east, and south;
- California Air Resources Board - Extend compliance timeline, and certain exemptions in rural counties, for retrofitting diesel engines in public fleets and off-road equipment (public and private equipment);
- Support efforts to streamline permitting programs/coordinated permitting for restoration projects (Mendocino County Resource Conservation District);

## WATCH LIST

- Streamlining Meat Processing Regulations; USDA Meat Inspection; Certification of Inspectors: The County supports local and regional efforts and studies to determine the feasibility of creating modern, small-scale, multi-species harvest and meat processing facilities. The advantages of this type of facility include improved worker safety, humane animal handling, environmentally-friendly, energy efficient, local production and sales of branded meat products in the growing niche meat market. Mendocino County supports the removal of regulatory barriers that prevent economic development opportunities that create and retain jobs to support our citizens and communities. The County also encourages efforts to legalize offal disposal in California to support the financial feasibility of small meat processing plants.
- Pension Reform: At the conclusion of the 2012 State legislative session, the California Legislature passed, and Governor Brown signed, legislation implementing the California Public Employees' Pension Reform Act of 2013, otherwise known as PEPRRA. Mendocino County continues to support reforms that are fair and sustainable over the long term, and do not disadvantage the County's current and prospective employees;
- Food Policy Issues and Support for Local Food Systems/Security: The County supports local and regional food system initiatives to promote availability of local goods and food service markets in retail, institutional, and commercial operations, including projects that capitalize on food system opportunities by developing regional food hubs, i.e., centralized facilities designed to aggregate, store, process, distribute, and/or market locally produced food products. With coordinated effort and in-depth understanding of existing resources and needs, local farms and food producers could both satisfy local food needs and generate a surplus for marketing to the greater San Francisco Bay Area. A fully developed local food system in this area would strengthen communities, assure food security, support local economic development, and create new jobs in the local farm sector. The County further supports the efforts of Senator Noreen Evans, Chair of the Senate Select Committee on California Food: Local, Organic, and Sustainable Systems;
- Repeal of State Responsibility Area (SRA) fire prevention fees (pursuant to ABX1 29; Chaptered by the Secretary of State; Chapter 8, Statutes of 2011-12 First Extraordinary Session) imposing fire prevention fees within State Responsibility Areas (SRA) served by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE);
- Support CSAC Coastal Counties Association efforts/engagement in developing better working relations between the California Coastal Commission and local government;
- Impacts of Federal deficit-reduction on California's Health and Human Services programs;
- Monitor developments with the Bay Delta Conservation Plan to ensure that Mendocino County is not negatively impacted by Bay Delta water planning;

- MLPA (Marine Life Protection Act) monitoring program;
- Support responsible Proposition 13 reform measures associated with taxation of commercial property and/or “split roll” property tax. Legislative efforts are underway to reform Proposition 13 with respect to assessment of commercial property. Reformers maintain that the 1978 initiative was passed to give relief to homeowners and that a “loophole” requiring reassessment only if a single entity owns more than 50% of the property has cost the state, and counties, billions in potential tax revenue.

# FEDERAL ADVOCACY

2014 MENDOCINO COUNTY LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM

## ELECTED CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATIVES:

Congressman Jared Huffman, 2<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District

Senator Barbara Boxer, United States Senate

Senator Dianne Feinstein, United States Senate

## PRIORITIES FOR FEDERAL ADVOCACY:

**PREVENT DISPROPORTIONATE REDUCTIONS TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT THROUGH UNDERFUNDED MANDATES AND/OR COST SHIFTS AS A RESULT OF DEFICIT REDUCTION MEASURES, FY 2014 APPROPRIATIONS, OR THE "GRAND BARGAIN"**

Virtually any budget decision at the federal level will have an impact on California's economy, state and local budgets, and services for the most vulnerable Californians. Following the federal government shutdown in October 2013, and the temporary measure to reopen government, the nation eagerly awaits a Congressional proposal that would set FY 2014 appropriations, and address sequestration and the federal debt-limit, entitled the "Grand Bargain." December 13, 2013, represents the self-imposed deadline for Congressional leaders to reach a deal.

*(While Congressional leaders announced a budget deal on December 11, 2013, as of this writing, the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 was awaiting a vote in the Senate.)*

We urge federal policymakers to respect and protect local decision-making authority at the county level, including strengthening intergovernmental collaboration and solutions focused on enhancing federal, state, local partnerships that reflect a balanced approach to deficit reduction.

**PROTECTION FOR SENIORS ENTITLEMENT REFORM: SOCIAL SECURITY & MEDICARE**

As congress considers entitlement reforms as a provision of the deficit reduction process, Mendocino County will advocate for protection for seniors on Social Security and Medicare and vital "safety net" programs such as nutrition and respite programs.

**CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR THE SECURE RURAL SCHOOLS & COMMUNITY SELF DETERMINATION ACT FUNDING**

Historically the schools and road infrastructure of Mendocino County has been supported by logging on United States Forest Service (USFS) land. Since 1908, the federal government has remained committed to helping forest county governments and schools succeed by compensating counties for the tax-exempt status of federal forested lands in their communities. To help continue this commitment to rural America, Congress enacted the Secure Rural Schools Act (SRSA) in 2000. The Act provides funding for rural counties and school districts to help replace revenue from dwindling forest receipts. Mendocino County strongly supports a long-term reauthorization of SRSA. Extending this funding for our nation's poorest rural areas is essential if we are to stabilize the Mendocino County economy.

**SUPPORT FOR COLLECTION OF  
INTERNET SALES TAX  
(E-COMMERCE)**

Significant revenues are lost to cities and counties from the lack of a uniform sales tax policy for internet sales. In 2012, the State Legislature granted a one-year deferral on the collection of sales tax from out of state internet retailers while advocating for a uniform approach through federal legislation. In the 2011-2012 Congressional legislative season, the Board joined NACo in supporting recent proposals such as the Main Street Fairness Act (S. 1452 and H.R. 2701) and the Marketplace Fairness Act (S. 1832). During the 2011-2012 season, S. 1832 expired without being enacted. The bill was revived during the next legislative season, and in its current form (S. 743), was passed by the U.S. Senate on May 6, 2013. The bill is currently being considered in the House of Representatives; however, its future is uncertain. The bill would allow states and local governments to require large Internet retailers to collect sales tax.

Additionally, on December 2, 2013, the U.S. Supreme Court chose not to revisit the issue of sales tax, leaving a 1992 ruling the last decision on the matter, which does not require online retailers to collect taxes if they do not have a physical presence in the state.

Enacting marketplace fairness legislation would not only create a level playing field for local businesses, it would also grant state and local governments the ability to enforce existing sales tax laws and stop the loss of billions of dollars in uncollected sales taxes in e-commerce every year, estimated to be more than \$23 billion in 2012.

**PROMOTION OF  
RURAL BROADBAND**

Collaborate with the Broadband Alliance of Mendocino County (BAMC) to build a robust county fiber backbone infrastructure and advocate expanding affordable broadband access to underserved homes, businesses, schools, public safety facilities, and other institutions throughout Mendocino County. Areas of advocacy may include: Universal right to service which includes maintaining landline connections to those areas without cellular coverage, funding broadband deployment, and requiring accurate deployment data.

Continue to work with other northern California counties to identify and meet regional needs using a comprehensive, integrated approach to expand broadband infrastructure in our communities.

**INCREASING FEDERAL  
RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR  
THE FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR  
COYOTE DAM AND OTHER  
INFRASTRUCTURE MAINTENANCE  
FOR COYOTE VALLEY DAM  
(U.S. CORPS OF ENGINEERS)**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) built Coyote Dam in 1959 for the purposes of flood control, water supply, irrigation, and recreation. In the 51 years since project completion many issues have developed including: concerns with seismic stability, flood forecasting uncertainty, spillway design, reservoir sedimentation, revised engineering and environmental standards, inundation of recreational facilities, and new mandates affecting inflow and outflow for the protection of endangered fisheries. The cumulative effect of these issues have greatly diminished Coyote Dam's ability to achieve its intended goals, causing negative impacts to the economy, public safety, and the environment.

The County supports increased funding in order to continue work on the Feasibility Study in this fiscal year consistent with the Feasibility Study Cost Share Agreement signed by the USACE and the Inland Water and Power Commission (IWPC), of which Mendocino County is a member.

**FARM BILL SPENDING:  
SUPPORT OF CDFA’S FARM BILL  
PRIORITIES AND  
RECOMMENDATIONS**

Advocate revising the Operations Manual passed by Congress in 1958 for the Coyote Valley Dam water releases to address year-to-year carry over supply issues in Lake Mendocino and comply with the Russian River Biological Opinion recommendations to protect listed fish.

Support the long term reauthorization and full funding of Farm Bill programs that support rural America, including Farm Bill policy changes that improve USDA Rural Development programs by simplifying applications, enhancing technical assistance for rural counties and other stakeholders and ensuring funding decisions are based on the strategic priorities of rural regions and counties.

The County supports the California Department of Food and Agriculture’s priorities for the Farm Bill, including:

- A renewed commitment to our farmers and ranchers
- Meeting the nutritional needs of our population
- Protecting the natural resource benefits of our working lands
- Revitalizing our local communities
- Ensuring Plant and Animal Health and Safety
- Promoting Specialty Crops – Fruits, Vegetables, Nuts and Foods that Protect Public Health
- Protecting our Environment and Natural Resources and Promoting Renewable Energy
- Improving Public Health and Nutrition
- Revitalizing Rural Communities
- Investing in Research and Education
- Developing International Markets
- A Safety Net for Farmers and Ranchers
- Supporting Organic Agriculture
- Ensuring all Farmers and Ranchers Have Access to Farm Bill Programs
- Advocate on the definition of *rural community* that is favorable to California

**ENCOURAGE EFFORTS TO  
COMBAT ILLEGAL TRESPASS  
(MARIJUANA CULTIVATION)  
ON PUBLIC AND PRIVATE LANDS**

Instances of illegal trespass and violent crimes on both public and private lands place our residents, visitors, and law enforcement officers at risk. The County supports measures to combat the impacts of these illegal activities within Mendocino County. The County will advocate for solutions to stem illegal marijuana cultivation in all areas of the county by working with private property owners, the U.S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the California State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection, the California Department of Parks and Recreation, and other regulatory entities to ameliorate this problem.

The County also supports fines that cover the cost of site clean-up and restoration to mitigate for the impacts to the land, water quality and quantity. On August 27, 2013, the Board of Supervisors authorized a letter of support for H.R. 2735 (Protecting Lands Against Narcotics Trafficking Act), which would increase penalties on those who illegally use public or private property while trespassing and while damaging natural resources.

**SUPPORT THE REPEAL OR  
MODIFICATION OF FEDERAL  
PROHIBITION OF MARIJUANA**

Inconsistencies in local, State, and Federal law create challenges within our public safety system network and criminal justice system. Mendocino County supports federal initiatives to either repeal or modify the federal prohibition of marijuana, and encourages federal recognition of state laws regulating medical marijuana. Mendocino County supports the principles

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Mendocino County supports adequate funding to address illegal water diversion, water pollution, erosion, poisoning of wildlife, and other environmental damage associated with trespass marijuana growing operations.

The County will support budgetary proposals, in addition to legislative and regulatory efforts, to enhance wildfire protection/restoration efforts and promote the use of biomass.

Excess woody biomass in Mendocino County forests increases vulnerability to catastrophic forest fire events, has negative impacts on forest habitat and health and impedes the growth of economically viable timber. Environmentally, economically and socially responsible biomass utilization can help restore the forest and provide well-paying restoration, transportation and processing jobs for a community that has been hampered by job losses due to the closure of sawmills and the overall decline of the timber industry. Biomass can be converted into a number of value added products including electricity, biodiesel, biochar, pellets and more. In most cases these products off-set the use of fossil fuels such as petroleum and coal. Energy created using biomass is considered to be carbon neutral by the EPA. If done in alignment with community values and ecological realities, biomass utilization can be part of a sustainable forest based economy in Mendocino County.

The Mendocino County Woody Biomass Working Group and Coastal Biomass Collaborative are working together to raise money to lay the groundwork for multiple small-scale biomass gasification power plants in the county. This initiative has become increasingly feasible due to new California legislation SB1122, which requires private power utilities to purchase 50MW of electricity from small-scale biomass power plants whose feedstock comes from high fire risk areas. The legislation provides monetary incentives for investors making construction and operation financially viable. Mendocino County needs upfront funds to complete four feasibility/ business plans at old mill sites throughout the county. The completion of these plans will make these sites investor ready. The realization of this initiative will help make a reality of the “restoration economy” where energy is produced locally, responsibly, sustainably, and turns material that would otherwise be considered a fire hazard into a solution for 21st century problems like energy dependence, climate change, and the need for living wage jobs.

**ENCOURAGE LOCALLY-BASED  
MODELS FOR ENERGY DELIVERY  
(INCLUDING WIND, SOLAR,  
GEOTHERMAL)**

Mendocino County encourages development of locally-based models for energy delivery/energy independence including wind, solar, and geothermal energy. Local energy delivery can provide our constituents with alternative energy sources and more options.

The County will support efforts for Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) which allows cities and counties to aggregate the buying power of individual customers within a defined jurisdiction in order to secure alternative energy supply contracts. Currently, nearly one million Americans receive service from CCAs, including Marin County, and most recently, Sonoma County.



**NOYO HARBOR  
DREDGE PROJECT  
(U.S. CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
FUNDING)**

The Noyo Harbor in Fort Bragg is a Federal channel. Life and safety of the fishing and recreational boating industry depend on a passable harbor channel. Noyo Harbor is the only safe refuge harbor between Bodega Bay and Eureka. Noyo is also home to an important Coast Guard search and rescue base. The last dredging occurred in 2009, and the USACE sought funding to continue this effort for federal FY 2011.

Dredging is only part of this issue however, as the spoils produced from this activity must be deposited in a manner that complies with all relevant regulations. As the USACE continues to research options to deal with the spoils issue, the County of Mendocino maintains its support of efforts to remedy this situation through the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA), including language authorizing the USACE to take responsibility for the future disposal of dredged material from the Noyo Harbor District.

**SUPPORT RENOVATION  
OF VETERANS' BUILDINGS AND  
FUNDING FOR COUNTY  
VETERAN'S SERVICES**

The County of Mendocino owns or co - locates six veteran's buildings throughout the County. Most of these facilities were built in the 1930's and 1940's and are in need of American Disabilities Act (ADA) improvements and standard kitchen upgrades. These buildings serve as an important resource for our County's veterans, as emergency shelters during disasters, potential broadband access points for underserved communities, and as community meeting and activity locations for numerous private and public agencies.

**SUPPORT FUNDING/  
PROGRAM PRESERVATION**

Many programs are at risk with the anticipated loss of State and Federal funding. The Board supports efforts to sustain funding enabling continuation of the following programs for Mendocino County's constituents:

- Research funding for the National Clean Plant Network to address Grapevine Red Blotch Disease. Mendocino County requests that the United States Department of Agriculture direct the National Clean Plant Network to focus research activities on Grapevine Red Blotch Disease; specifically finding improved detection techniques and evaluating the efficacy of microshoot tip culture for virus elimination;
- Block Grants for local decision making and planning for affordable housing including housing projects for veterans;
- Food Policy Issues and Support for Local Food Systems/Security: The County supports local and regional food system initiatives to promote availability of local goods and food service markets in retail, institutional, and commercial operations, including projects that capitalize on food system opportunities by developing regional food hubs, i.e., centralized facilities designed to aggregate, store, process, distribute, and/or market locally produced food products. With coordinated effort and in-depth understanding of existing resources and needs, local farms and food producers could both satisfy local food needs and generate a surplus for marketing to the greater San Francisco Bay Area. A fully developed local food system in this area would strengthen communities, assure food security, support local economic development, and create new jobs in the local farm sector. The County further supports the efforts of Senator Noreen Evans, Chair of the Senate Select Committee on California Food: Local, Organic, and Sustainable Systems;

**ENCOURAGE REGULATORY  
RELIEF/REFORM**

Given government downsizing at all levels, the Board supports efforts to achieve responsible regulatory relief in the following areas:

- Streamlining Meat Processing Regulations; USDA Meat Inspection; Certification of Inspectors: The County supports local and regional efforts and studies to determine the feasibility of creating modern, small-scale, multi-species harvest and meat processing facilities. The advantages of this type of facility include improved worker safety, humane animal handling, environmentally-friendly, energy efficient, local production and sales of branded meat products in the growing niche meat market. Mendocino County supports the removal of regulatory barriers that prevent economic development opportunities that create and retain jobs to support our citizens and communities. The County also encourages efforts to legalize offal disposal in California to support the financial feasibility of small meat processing plants;
- Review and potentially seek “debt forgiveness” from the Small Reclamation Act Loan associated with the consolidation of the Redwood Valley County Water District and the RRFCWCID.
- FY 2014 Appropriations;
- Federal Deficit-Reduction Measures;
- Continued sequestration spending levels;
- Waters of the U.S. Guidance: Impact on Counties (EPA and USACE - May 2, 2011, Draft).

**WATCH LIST**

# MENDOCINO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS



(Left to Right: Supervisor Gjerde, Supervisor Hamburg, Supervisor Brown, Supervisor McCowen, Supervisor Pinches)

## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS CONTACT INFORMATION:

<p><b>CARRE BROWN, 1<sup>ST</sup> DISTRICT SUPERVISOR</b>                  TERM IN OFFICE: JANUARY 2013 – DECEMBER 2016                  JANUARY 2009 – DECEMBER 2012</p>	<p><b>JOHN MCCOWEN, 2<sup>ND</sup> DISTRICT SUPERVISOR</b>                  TERM IN OFFICE: JANUARY 2013 – DECEMBER 2016                  JANUARY 2009 – DECEMBER 2012</p>
<p><b>JOHN PINCHES, 3<sup>RD</sup> DISTRICT SUPERVISOR</b>                  TERM IN OFFICE: JANUARY 2011 – DECEMBER 2014                  JANUARY 2007 – DECEMBER 2010                  JANUARY 1995 – DECEMBER 1998</p>	<p><b>DAN GJERDE, 4<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT SUPERVISOR</b>                  TERM IN OFFICE: JANUARY 2013 – DECEMBER 2016</p>
<p><b>DAN HAMBURG, 5<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT SUPERVISOR</b>                  TERM IN OFFICE: JANUARY 2011 – DECEMBER 2014                  JANUARY 1981 – DECEMBER 1984</p>	
<p>501 Low Gap Road, Room 1010, Ukiah, CA 95482                  (707) 463-4221 Telephone   (707) 463-7237 Fax                  Website: <a href="http://www.co.mendocino.ca.us/bos/">http://www.co.mendocino.ca.us/bos/</a></p>	

## ELECTED STATE REPRESENTATIVES:

<p><b>WESLEY CHESBRO, ASSEMBLYMEMBER (D - ARCATA)</b>                  2<sup>nd</sup> Assembly District                  Website: <a href="http://asmdc.org/members/a02/">http://asmdc.org/members/a02/</a>                  Phone: (707) 463-5770 – Ukiah Office                  Phone: (916) 319-2002 – Sacramento Office</p>	<p><b>NOREEN EVANS, STATE SENATOR (D - SANTA ROSA)</b>                  2<sup>nd</sup> Senate District                  Website: <a href="http://sd02.senate.ca.gov/">http://sd02.senate.ca.gov/</a>                  Phone: (707) 468-8914 – Ukiah Office                  Phone: (916) 651-4002 – Sacramento Office</p>
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## ELECTED CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATIVES:

<p><b>JARED HUFFMAN, CONGRESSMAN (D - SAN RAFAEL)</b>                  2<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District                  United States House of Representatives                  Website: <a href="http://huffman.house.gov/">http://huffman.house.gov/</a>                  Phone: (707) 962-0933 – Fort Bragg Office                  Phone/Fax: (707) 671-7449 – Ukiah Office                  Phone: (202) 225-5161 – Washington, D.C. Office</p>	<p><b>BARBARA BOXER, SENATOR (D - SAN FRANCISCO)</b>                  United States Senate                  Website: <a href="http://boxer.senate.gov/">http://boxer.senate.gov/</a>                  Phone: (510) 286-8537 – Bay Area Office                  Phone: (202) 224-3553 – Washington, D.C. Office</p> <p><b>DIANNE FEINSTEIN, SENATOR (D - SAN FRANCISCO)</b>                  United States Senate                  Website: <a href="http://www.feinstein.senate.gov/public/">http://www.feinstein.senate.gov/public/</a>                  Phone: (415) 393-0707 – San Francisco Office                  Phone: (202) 224-3841 – Washington, D.C. Office</p>
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