

Mendocino County Climate Action Advisory Committee
Friday May 20, 2:00 - 5:00
Agenda

Note new meeting start time of 2:00

Mendocino County Planning and Building Services is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

When: May 20, 2022 **02:00** AM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Topic: Mendocino County Climate Action Committee

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://mendocinocounty.zoom.us/j/81212151702>

Or Telephone: +1 669 900 9128

Webinar ID: 812 1215 1702

International numbers available: <https://mendocinocounty.zoom.us/u/kvku8nP3p>

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Review of Agenda
3. Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items
4. Review and Approval of Minutes from March of 2022 (Attachment 1)
5. Adopt Resolution to Extend Meeting via Covid (Attachment 2)
6. Discuss and consider the Mendocino County Resource Conservation District actions with regard to Climate Change. (Attachment 3)
7. Review and receive update on BOS letters re PG&E line clearing (Attachment 4)
8. Review and consider send a letter to the BOS requesting a moratorium on the approval of new gas stations. (Attachment 5)
9. Discuss and develop a recommendation about adding Climate Change concerns to the General Plan update and Zoning Ordinance Revisions.
10. Consider adoptin a position and preparing a letter to the BOS regarding January Webinar - Code Red: what Municipalities Can Do” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7qiDsP9_-44
11. Reports from committee members about activities.
12. Identify a Meeting Date for June 2022.
13. Adjournment

**RESOLUTION OF THE MENDOCINO COUNTY CLIMATE ACTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
AUTHORIZING REMOTE TELECONFERENCE MEETINGS OF THE LEGISLATIVE BODIES
OF THE MENDOCINO COUNTY CLIMATE ACTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
PURSUANT TO THE RALPH M. BROWN ACT**

WHEREAS, all meetings of the Mendocino County Climate Action Advisory Committee and its legislative bodies are open and public, as required by the Ralph M. Brown Act (Cal. Gov. Code §§ 54950 – 54963), so that any member of the public may attend, participate, and view the legislative bodies conduct their business; and

WHEREAS, the Brown Act, Government Code section 54953(e), makes provisions for remote teleconferencing participation in meetings by members of a legislative body, without compliance with the requirements of Government Code section 54953(b)(3), subject to the existence of certain conditions; and

WHEREAS, on March 4, 2020, Governor Newsom issued a Proclamation of a State of Emergency declaring a state of emergency exists due to the outbreak of respiratory illness due to a novel coronavirus (a disease now known as COVID-19), pursuant to the California Emergency Services Act (Government Code section 8625) and that State of Emergency is still in effect in the State of California; and,

WHEREAS, as of the date of this Resolution, neither the Governor nor the state Legislature have exercised their respective powers pursuant to Government Code section 8629 to lift the state of emergency either by proclamation or by concurrent resolution the state Legislature; and,

WHEREAS, the California Department of Industrial Relations has issued regulations related to COVID-19 Prevention for employees and places of employment. Title 8 of the California Code of Regulations, Section 3205(c)(5)(D) specifically recommends physical (social) distancing as one of the measures to decrease the spread of COVID-19 based on the fact that particles containing the virus can travel more than six feet, especially indoors; and,

WHEREAS, the Mendocino County Public Health Officer continues to recommend teleconferencing during public meetings of all legislative bodies to protect the community's health against the spread of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the Mendocino County Climate Action Advisory Committee, finds that state or local officials have imposed or recommended measures to promote social distancing based on the Mendocino County Public Health Officer recommendation and the California Department of Industrial Relations' issuance of regulations related to COVID-19 Prevention through Title 8 of the California Code of Regulations, Section 3205(c)(5)(D); and,

WHEREAS, as a consequence, the Mendocino County Climate Action Advisory Committee does hereby find that current conditions meet the circumstances set for in Government Code section 54953(e)(3) to allow this legislative body to conduct its meetings by teleconferencing without compliance with Government Code section 54953 (b)(3), pursuant to Section 54953(e), and that such legislative body shall comply with the requirements to provide the public with access to the meetings as prescribed by Government Code section 54953(e)(2) to ensure the public can safely participate in and observe local government meetings.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE Mendocino County Climate Action Advisory Committee, as follows:

Section 1. Recitals. All of the above recitals are true and correct and are incorporated into this Resolution by this reference.

Section 2. Current Conditions Authorize Teleconference Public Meetings of Legislative Bodies. Based on the California Governor's continued declaration of a State of Emergency, the Mendocino County Public Health Officer's recommendation to continue teleconferencing, and the regulations issued by the California Department of Industrial Relations, the Mendocino County Climate Action Advisory Committee finds that the conditions continue to exist pursuant to Government Code section 54953(e)(3) to allow legislative bodies to use teleconferencing to hold public meetings in accordance with Government Code section 54953(e)(2) to ensure members of the public have continued access to safely observe and participate in local government meetings.

Section 3. Remote Teleconference Meetings. The Mendocino County Climate Action Advisory Committee is hereby authorized to take all actions necessary to carry out the intent and purpose of this Resolution including, conducting open and public meetings in accordance with Government Code section 54953(e)(2) and other applicable provisions of the Brown Act.

Section 4. Effective Date. This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

The foregoing Resolution introduced by _____, seconded by _____, and carried this ____ of _____ 2021, by the Mendocino County Climate Action Advisory Committee, by the following vote:

AYES:

NO:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

WHEREUPON, the Chair declared said Resolution adopted and SO ORDERED.

Mendocino County Sustainable Ag Lands Committee (SALC)

FACT SHEET



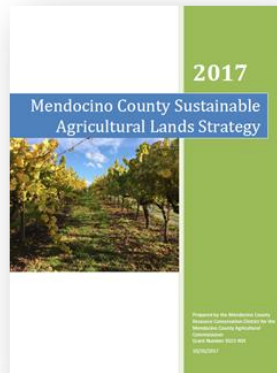
Background

In November of 2015, the Mendocino County Department of Agriculture was awarded a grant for the *Strategic Growth Council – Sustainable Agricultural Lands Strategy* through the California Department of Conservation. The County contracted with the Mendocino County Resource Conservation District (MCRCD) to conduct an assessment of agricultural lands at risk of conversion and develop recommendations for policies and actions that could be undertaken by the County and community partners to conserve agricultural land resources.

The *Mendocino County Sustainable Agricultural Lands Strategy* was completed in October 2017 and can be found at: www.mcrcd.org/

Publications

Or for more information on the Committee, contact:
Seth.Myrick@mcrcd.org



Committee Goals and Objectives

The primary goal of the Committee is to conserve agricultural and natural resource lands throughout Mendocino County while encouraging responsible and balanced development. This will be accomplished by:

- Raising awareness among Mendocino County communities about ag land contributions to the economy, ecosystem services and quality of life.
- Encouraging a planning process that is inclusive and includes the use of conservation tools such as conservation easements, tax incentives, urban growth boundaries, zoning and ag mitigation programs to conserve ag land.
- Increasing communication and collaboration with diverse stakeholders and decision makers.

LEAD COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Carre Brown, Mendocino Co Board of Supervisors
Harinder Grewal, Mendocino Co Agricultural Commissioner
Carol Mandel, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
Devon Jones, Mendocino Co Farm Bureau
Megan McCluer, Mendocino Co Resource Conservation District (RCD)
Greg Nelson, Planning Commissioner/Farmer
Glenn McGourty, UC Cooperative Extension
Ann Cole, Mendocino Land Trust
Barbara Goodell, Anderson Valley Land Trust
Alan Nicholson, Inland Mendocino Land Trust
Kyle Farmer, Rancher

The Benefits of Conserving Ag Land:

- **A long-term, stable land base for the future of the County's ag industry**
- **A vibrant and diverse economy and production of local food**
- **The preservation of rural character, cultural heritage and quality of life**
- **Climate change mitigation through carbon sequestration**
- **Wildlife habitat and reduced habitat fragmentation**
- **Groundwater recharge, reduced storm water run-off and flooding**
- **Local food is fresher, more nutritious with less packaging and transportation needs**

Mendocino County Sustainable Agricultural Lands Committee

FACT SHEET



Agriculture is a crucial component of the Ukiah Valley and Mendocino County's economy and cultural heritage. Agriculture provides numerous jobs for County residents and substantial tax revenue for Mendocino County.

The Vision of the Committee is a well-balanced mix of urban, rural, agricultural, and grazing lands, forest, waterways and wetlands in Mendocino County that sustains humans, local food production, ecosystems, working landscapes and wildlife.

The primary Mission of the Committee is to conserve agricultural and natural resource lands throughout Mendocino County while encouraging responsible and balanced development.

The committee will provide stakeholders and decision makers with clear and concise information to allow for responsible and balanced development while conserving agricultural values and natural resources throughout Mendocino County.

AGRICULTURAL FACTS:

- California lost 58,587 acres of irrigated farmland between 2010-2012.¹ Mendocino County lost 1,394 acres of important farmland between 2014-2016. Agriculture is an important economic, environmental and cultural resource in our county. For these reasons, agricultural conversion is a critical issue to pay attention to in relation to local land use policies.
- The county of Mendocino contains less than 50,000 acres of productive farmland, 27,044 acres of which is identified as Prime, Unique, or of Statewide Importance as of 2016.² The majority of this farmland is located in southern Mendocino County in areas anticipated to experience population growth and urbanization over the next two decades.
- A risk assessment conducted using applicable Agricultural Conservation Easement Grant Program 2015/16 risk categories, found that 90 percent of Prime agricultural land, 85 percent of Farmland of Statewide Importance, and 83 percent of Unique farmland was at-risk of conversion to residential development. The highest risk areas in the county occur within municipal services boundaries and their Sphere of Influence or within two miles of these areas.

1. 2015 California Farmland Conversion Report. http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/FMMP_2010-2012_FCR.aspx

2. CA Department of Conservation 2014-16 Mendocino Co. Land Use Conversion Data (latest report). <http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/Mendocino.aspx>

Mendocino County Sustainable Ag Lands Committee

WILLIAMSON ACT FACT SHEET



Background

The California Land Conservation Act, more popularly known as the Williamson Act, was enacted in 1965 to preserve agricultural and open space lands from premature conversions to urban uses.

The Williamson Act helps to preserve agricultural and open space land by lowering property taxes of landowners when they enter into 10-year rolling agreements (9-year rolling contracts in Mendocino County since 2010) with counties to restrict the use of their property to agriculture and open space.

The intent of the Act is to maintain the agricultural economy of the state and to ensure adequate, healthful and nutritious food for future residents. The lowered property tax is based on a complex calculation tied to agricultural income rather than the current fair market value of the land.

The state paid counties subvention funding to offset the loss in property taxes related to Williamson Act contracts from 1971-2009. State budget cuts have not allowed for any subvention funds to be allocated to counties since 2009. To incentivize counties to continue to support the Act, AB 2530/SB 863 passed in 2010 and gave counties the option to reduce contracts from 10 years to 9 years and recapture 10% of the property tax value. Mendocino County adopted the 9-year rolling contract term in 2010 and has applied this term length ever since.

Williamson Act in Mendocino County

- As of December of 2018 there were 33,742 acres of prime land and 430,802 acres of range land/non-prime land under Williamson Act contracts in the county.
- Applications to place properties under a Williamson Act contract can be submitted to the county for consideration by the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors on or before May 1st of the year prior to the year which the contract is desired to take effect.
- All eligibility requirements must be met prior to properties being considered for a contract.
- The Assessor's Office shall mail agricultural preserve questionnaires to the owners of contracted land no less than every 4 years to verify compliance with the terms of the contract.
- Full text can be found under Chapter 22.08 of the Mendocino County Code.



"... CONSIDER 16 MILLION ACRES [PROTECTED BY THE WILLIAMSON ACT], IN MANY CASES THE BEST AGRICULTURAL LAND IN THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA, WHICH MEANS THE BEST AGRICULTURAL LAND IN THE WORLD. I THINK THAT THE ACT HAS FORCED DEVELOPMENT ONTO OTHER LAND AND THAT IT WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO. BUT, ULTIMATELY, IF WE ARE GOING TO BE ABLE TO GROW ENOUGH FOOD TO FEED THE WORLD, IT WILL BE UP TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT TO KEEP OUR BEST LAND OFF THE MARKET, TO TELL DEVELOPERS 'NO, IF YOU WANT TO BUILD, YOU MUST GO SOMEPLACE ELSE.'"

JOHN WILLIAMSON
(1913-1998)

Former State Assemblyman
and Author of the Williamson Act



Agricultural Preserve Information

- An agricultural preserve may be created prior to or concurrently with the creation and execution of a Williamson Act contract restricting land within the preserve. However, all land under a Williamson Act contract must be located within an agricultural preserve.
- Once an agricultural preserve is established, a Williamson Act contract may be executed for any qualifying agricultural or open space land within the preserve.
- No agricultural preserve may be established or approved by the Board of Supervisors unless all properties within the proposed preserve boundaries has been approved by the Board of Supervisors for the following restrictive zoning: Agricultural (A-G), Rangeland (R-L), or Forestland (F-L).
- With some exceptions, an agricultural preserve shall consist of no less than 100 acres; provided that, in order to meet this requirement, two or more parcels may be combined if they are contiguous and further provided that no parcel containing less than 100 acres shall be combined for this purpose with any other parcels within an existing agricultural preserve unless the owners of all parcels included within the agricultural preserve have indicated their approval in writing on the petition.
- No agricultural preserve may be disestablished or altered to remove land from the preserve if such removal would cause or contribute to the premature or unnecessary conversion of agricultural land to urban uses or to significant encroachment of incompatible land uses into the immediate vicinity of contracted land.

Williamson Act Contract Eligibility

- A minimum of 50% of the contracted property must be continuously used or maintained for agricultural uses.
- Parcels must be a minimum of 10 acres for prime lands or 40 acres for non-prime lands.
- Compatible uses (structures, etc.) allowed on contracted lands must occupy no more than 15% of the contracted land, or 5 acres, whichever is less excluding public/private roads or driveways.
- Lands restricted by a contract must meet annual income requirements of \$1000/acre for prime land with vines or bushes, \$300/acre for prime land with fruit or nut trees, \$2000 gross total income per farm operation plus \$2.50/acre gross income for prime or non-prime lands used for unprocessed animal or plant products, hay production, grazing, non-permanent row crops or horse breeding.
- Evidence of substantial investment/development (whether incurred by a property owner or tenant), including capitalized improvements, maintenance and other costs related to qualified agricultural uses, may be substituted for annual income. The county may consider all qualifying agricultural income generated by the property, including tenant income, which shall be pro-rated based on the percentage of the year the property was used by the tenant.
- The contract runs with the land and not the ownership.
- Cannabis is considered an allowable use on contracted properties, but is not a qualifying use that can be used to meet the income requirements above. (County resolution 17-041. March 21, 2017)
- Non-renewal of a contract can be initiated by the landowner or the county.

Mendocino County Sustainable Ag Lands Committee (SALC)

CARBON SEQUESTRATION FACT SHEET



What is Carbon Sequestration?

Carbon sequestration is the process of capturing and storing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

Plants naturally absorb carbon dioxide? Yes!

During photosynthesis, a plant absorbs sunlight, water, and carbon dioxide to create carbohydrates and oxygen.

The carbohydrates, which contain carbon, are stored in the plant's root safe within the soil.

Additional information can be found at:
www.usgs.gov

What can you do to promote carbon sequestration on your land?

Here's how:

- **Start carbon farming! This term relates to retaining carbon in soil by using minimum tillage**
- **Use less fertilizer and pesticides**
- **Add compost to increase the amount of carbon stored in both grassland and cropland soils**
- **Plant nitrogen-rich cover crops, like peas, beans and clover, to keep soil protected**

For technical assistance on your land contact:
carol.mandel@usda.gov

For carbon farm planning contact:
lynette@fibershed.org

The Benefits of Carbon Sequestration:

- **Carbon sequestration helps restore degraded soil which can improve agricultural productivity**
- **Fixing atmospheric carbon in the soil helps combat recurring drought and other extreme weather cycles associated with climate change**

Mendocino County Sustainable Ag Lands Committee (SALC)

CARBON SEQUESTRATION FACT SHEET

Why is carbon sequestration important to practice in Mendocino County?



Healthy soil means less cost on fertilizer!

Better water retention in your soil!



Higher crop yields!

Implementing carbon farming practices could help you save money!



Protecting Mendocino County Agricultural Lands and Resident Livelihoods

Mendocino County has a rich history based in agriculture.

To help continue that story and enhance agricultural land, contact your local Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Mendocino County Resource Conservation District (MCRCD) offices.

Funding and technical assistance is available to help you implement conservation practices.

**Call NRCS to see if you qualify:
(707) 485-3233**

Want to know more about the Mendocino County Sustainable Ag Lands Committee (SALC)?

**Additional information can be found at:
www.mcrcd.org**

Mendocino County Sustainable Ag Lands Committee (SALC)

CONSERVATION EASEMENTS FACT SHEET



Tax Benefits of Conservation Easements

In 2015 Congress enacted one of the most powerful conservation measures in decades: the enhanced federal tax incentive for conservation easement donations. The

permanent conservation easement tax incentive is a powerful tool that helps Americans conserve their land voluntarily.

For land trusts across the country, the permanent incentive represents vastly increased opportunities to protect the special places in their widely varied communities.

If you own land with important natural, agricultural or historic resources, donating a conservation easement can be a prudent way to both save the land you love forever and to realize significant federal tax savings.

Additional information can be found at:
www.landtrustalliance.org

Or for more information on the Sustainable Ag Lands Committee, contact: Seth.Myrick@mcrcd.org

Conservation Easements Defined

A conservation easement, also called a conservation agreement, is a voluntary and legally binding agreement between a landowner and a land trust or government agency.

When a landowner donates an easement to a land trust or public agency, she or he is giving away some of the rights associated with the land. The easement permanently limits uses of the donated parcel in order to protect its conservation values, as specified in the Internal Revenue Code (IRC) 170(h).

Conservation easements offer private landowners flexibility in protecting their land. For example, a donating landowner can retain the right to grow crops on a parcel while, at the same time, relinquishing the right to build additional structures on the parcel.

MENDOCINO COUNTY EXPERTS IN

CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

Anderson Valley Land Trust

Mendocino Land Trust

Mendocino Inland Land Trust

Land Trust Alliance

The Benefits of Conservation Easements:

- **Potential tax and estate planning benefits**
- **Preservation of agricultural lands**
- **The preservation of rural character, cultural heritage and quality of life**
- **Wildlife habitat and reduced habitat fragmentation**

Mendocino County Sustainable Agricultural Lands Committee

CONSERVATION EASEMENTS FACT SHEET



Conservation Easements vary greatly in value. In general, the highest easement values are found on tracts of open space under high development pressure. In some jurisdictions, placing an easement on one's land may also result in property tax savings for the landowner.

Conservation easements can be used to achieve a wide range of conservation purposes, including open space preservation, agricultural preservation, and natural resource protection. The conservation easement is recorded in the form of a grant deed and is binding on successive owners of the property in perpetuity. In other words, it is forever.

A conservation easement is an adaptable tool, and may be tailored for each specific property based on the common preservation goals of the landowner and the holder of the easement. For example, conservation easements may prohibit development over scenic landscapes; prohibit non-agricultural uses over agricultural land; restrict timber harvests to sustainable levels over forest land; or require that land be kept "forever wild" over natural areas.

CONSERVATION EASEMENT OPTIONS:

Stay on your land. A.) If you want to own and control your land during your lifetime, but assure its protection after your death, you can donate by will. B.) You may donate your property subject to a reserved life estate, meaning that you can continue to live on the donated property during your lifetime. C.) Another very effective way for landowners to conserve property while continuing to own and to occupy the land is to create a conservation easement. A conservation easement is a voluntary legal agreement between a landowner and Mendocino Land Trust which restricts the use of a particular property in order to protect its conservation values.

Gift your land. Donating land for conservation is one of the finest legacies a person can leave to future generations. If you choose to donate your land, we can work with you to identify the best arrangement.

Sell your land. Some landowners want their land to be conserved, but are not in a position to donate it, so they may consider selling it. In order for Mendocino Land Trust to purchase your land, we would need to research and secure funding from a variety of sources, which takes some time. This might include local, state or federal government funding, private entities and grassroots campaigns. Landowners may offer to sell for less than fair market value, which is called a "bargain sale." A bargain sale might make it easier to receive funding, and might also provide charitable deduction opportunities.

SALC 2020 CFP Overview

(Anonymous Organic Vineyard A)



- Mill Creek, Navarro River Watershed
- 4.0 acres of organic vineyard covered by Carbon Farm Plan
- Connected to Mill Creek Flow Enhancement project, supported by Wildlife Conservation Board
- Goals of the farm include to: increase holistic management; reduce production costs; improve key soil health indicators; increase farm resilience to drought, flood, fires, and climate change; reduce energy consumption in the farm

operation; benefit wildlife that can live in harmony with the vineyard, i.e., Coho salmon; protect natural resources and increase biodiversity on the property

Existing Practices			
Practice	Area	MT CO2e / 1 year	MT CO2e / 20 Years
1. No-Till (CPS 329)	4	1.08	21.6
2. Mulching (CPS 484)	4	1.68	33.6
3. Conservation Cover (CPS 327)	4	3.96	79.2
TOTAL	-	6.72	134.4
New Practices			
Practice	Area	MT CO2e / 1 year	MT CO2e / 20 Years
1. Compost application to vineyard	4	17.68	353.6
2. Hedgerow planting (CPS 422)	0.15	0.69	13.73
3. Prescribed grazing (CPS 528)	5.75	0.29	5.8
4. Conservation cover – pollinator planting (CPS 327)	0.2	0.056	1.12
TOTAL	-	18.71	374.25

(Anonymous Olive Orchard)



- Mill Creek, Navarro River Watershed
- 3.5 acres of organic and Mendocino Renegade-certified olive orchard covered by Carbon Farm Plan
- Goals of the farm include to: pass on to the next generation, grow food for family, friends, and the local community; manage orchard, cropland, and forestland to protect soil from erosion; manage farm roads to minimize any delivery of sediment into the watershed; reduce wildfire hazard; maintain native grasses and redwood forest; utilize alternative water storage and conservation strategies

Existing Practices			
Practice	Acres	MT CO ₂ e / 1 year	MT CO ₂ e / 20 Years
No-Till	2.2	0.6	12
Mulching	2.2	0.9	18
Conservation Cover	2.2	1.9	38

TOTAL	-	3.4	68
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New Practices			
Practice	Acres	MT CO2e / 1 year	MT CO2e / 20 Years
Compost application to orchards	2.2	9.7	194
Compost application to cropland	0.8	3.5	70
Hedgerow planting	0.2	1.1	22
Pollinator garden	0.1	0.5	10
TOTAL	-	14.8	296

(Anonymous Organic Vineyard B)



- Robinson Creek, Russian River Watershed
- 45.1 acres of organic, fish friendly vineyard covered by Carbon Farm Plan
- Farm goals include to: improve cover crop productivity and rooting depth; enhance drought resiliency and reduce irrigation inputs; enhance riparian vegetation and bank stabilization; improve insectary habitat; attract more flying wildlife; be a model for the community; provide the community with a place to grow their own gardens

Existing Practices			
Practice	Acres	MT CO2e / 1 year	MT CO2e / 20 Years
Cover crop	16	32	640
Compost application	6	26	520
Reduced tillage	26	2	40
Riparian Restoration	0.2	0.44	8.8

Multi-story cropping	0.5	0.9	18
TOTAL	-	61.34	1226.8
New Practices			
Practice	Acres	MT CO2e / 1 year	MT CO2e / 20 Years
Hedgerow	0.72	3	60
Cover crop	27.6	55	1,100
Prescribed grazing	62	2.5	50
No-tillage	62	6	120
Compost	56	250	5,000
Riparian Restoration	2.4	5	100
Shelterbelt/Windbreak	3,404	4	80
TOTAL	-	325.5	6510

(Anonymous Ranch)



- Potter Valley, Russian River and Upper Eel Watershed
- 205 acres of sheep/chicken pasture, orchard, and dye plant crop fields covered by Carbon Farm Plan
- Owners feel the need to be responsible land managers especially related to climate impacts- it gives them hope to be proactive; being connected with Fibershed and having that information hub has been very helpful
- Impacts in the chaparral/higher elevation areas of the property due to 2017 fire, including dead standing and downed trees, has led to lots of stress on the landowners during fire season every year

Existing Practices			
Practice	Acres	MT CO2e / 1 year	MT CO2e / 20 Years
Compost application	14.3	84.711	1694.2
Tree and Shrub Establishment	0.56	2.87	57.4

Silvopasture	4.5	6.03	120.6
Hedgerow	0.10	0.46	9.2
TOTAL	-	94.1	1881.4
New Practices			
Practice	Acres	MT CO2e / 1 year	MT CO2e / 20 Years
Hedgerow	0.21	0.97	19.4
Forage and Biomass Planting	5.7	6.9	138.0
Prescribed Grazing	60	4.4	88.0
Windbreak/Shelterbelt	0.30	1.38	27.6
Tree and Shrub Establishment	1.97	10.08	201.6
Riparian Restoration	0.50	1.1	22.0
Filter Strip	0.70	0.41	8.1
Range Planting	14.3	7.15	143.0
TOTAL	-	32.4	173.12



April 12, 2022

Ms. Melissa Semcer
Deputy Director, Electrical Infrastructure Directorate
Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety
California Natural Resources Agency
715 P Street, 20th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Ms. Semver,

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors and many members of our community are concerned about PG&E's vegetation removal strategy. We respectfully request that you work with the Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety to temporarily halt PG&E's Enhanced Vegetation Management (EVM) Program in Mendocino County.

PG&E's website claims the EVM "responds to the increasing wildfire threat our state faces by addressing overhanging limbs and branches directly above and around the lines. We will also *evaluate the condition of trees that may need to be addressed if they are tall enough to strike the lines.*"

However, it is not clear what tree removal criteria is under use nor is there a clear description of landowner rights for trees marked for removal on private property.

Indeed, two of the standard vegetation management techniques used by PG&E directly contradict the advice of Calfire regarding vegetation management for fire reduction. Specifically, Calfire recommends **AGAINST tree removal** as it encourages grass and brush growth and soil warming, which results in higher fire danger and recommends **AGAINST topping trees around power lines**, which results in excess growth on the tree top and/or a weakened tree and higher fire danger. And yet these are the very practices that PG&E uses most often in their EVM practices.

Please ask PG&E to provide the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors and its customers and landowners with PG&E easements with the following information:

- A thorough exploration of alternative approaches to wildfire safety other than removing trees.
- A clear description of how the tree removal was permitted, regulated and monitored given that property owners where the tree removal occurred were not notified of the

permitting process, nor did they have any opportunity to comment on the pending County permits.

- A description of Landowner rights regarding trees selected for removal.
- A workshop/townhall that clearly details landowner rights, along with a written explanation published in all of the local newspapers.
- The tree removal criteria.
- An overview of scientific basis for the tree removal process and if it will actually reduce fire hazards. PG&E's lack of line and equipment maintenance is the primary cause of PG&E culpable fires, not tree falls.
- The inventory of all trees by species and DBH (diameter Breast Height) and height that are marked for removal, and all trees inventoried by PGE contractors.
- A plan for replanting the equivalent number and types of trees to address the lost carbon storage and the lost carbon storage capacity.

From the above information the County and its citizens can understand and respond to their rights, impacts of the EVM on the environment and fire safety, and carbon sequestration loss based on volume (and therefore property values loss to the landowner) and species of the removed trees.

PG&E is overstepping its authority by cutting trees that are not a threat to the lines.

1. There has been no discussion of the many alternatives to removing trees.
2. There has been no public notification to Mendocino County residents when PG&E will come to "clear the lines" e.g., remove large trees within 100 feet of the lines.
3. No one can provide a straight answer about the questions posed above. The contractors give conflicting information and try to coerce landowners into cutting. The cutting crews get paid by the tree, so the incentive is to cut as many trees as possible.

There are more effective alternatives to tree removal, which are used by other California utilities to better effect. As noted in [The Harmful Effects of PG&E's Tree Removal Practices and Recommended Alternatives to Prevent Utility Wildfires](#) by the Sierra Club Utility Wildfire Prevention Taskforce: "Solutions to reduce or eliminate utility-associated wildfires include installation of steel reinforced core fully insulated aluminum cable (conductor), the use of spacer cables, and undergrounding. When undergrounding is contraindicated, improved conductors combined with computer operated circuit safety relays would solve California's utility wildfire problem."

It is time to stop PG&E's Enhanced Vegetation Management (EVM) Program in Mendocino County, until we have answers. Thanks for your help in this effort.

Sincerely,

Ted Williams

Chair
Mendocino County Board of Supervisors



Mendocino County Climate Action Advisory Committee

May 20, 2022

Board of Supervisors
501 Low Gap Road
Ukiah, CA 95482

Dear Supervisors,

We at the Mendocino County Climate Action Advisory Committee (MCCAAC) in accordance with our mandate, the Brown Act and public comment would urge the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors (BOS) to adopt a moratorium on permit applications for new petroleum fueling stations or fueling station expansions in the county. This policy change accords with efforts in Sonoma, Napa & Marin Counties to ban or limit new fossil fuel stations:

<https://www.pressdemocrat.com/article/news/new-gas-station-bans-working-their-way-through-sonoma-county-communities/>

<https://www.sierraclub.org/redwood/blog/2021/09/can-new-gas-stations-be-prohibited-sonoma-county-and-beyond>

Furthermore, we urge the Board of Supervisors to adopt an ordinance requiring:

1. All existing fossil fuel stations to provide a fuel tank removal plan to the County Planning & Building Services department by 2025.
2. Allows new fueling stations which provide alternative fueling technologies (Electric Vehicle Changing stations, hydrogen and other technologies).

By adopting the suggested policies, Supervisors could show leadership in the fight against the Climate Crisis and ensuring that future generations have clean air to breathe, clean water to drink and healthy land to live on.

Sincerely,