



To Whom It May Concern:

The purpose of my letter is to outline the economic reality of the North Coast Region so that you may better create a public policy that does not have the adverse affect of regional unemployment and social chaos because those policies cannot be met because the standards do not apply to our landscape and culture.

There has been a shifting in the economic base of the North Coast region during the last one hundred years. The timber economies built most of this region, accompanied by fishing and tourism. Agriculture is a recent addition to our natural resource based economies. Cannabis farms have operated in the shadows of society here since 1970. Our farming practices were shared regionally and secret. With legalization, there is a movement to bring these farming practices to the forefront. Ideas like agroforestry, permaculture, no-till agriculture all incorporate the broader environmental stewardship into our daily farming practices. That is why many of us cannabis farms have welcomed the strong environmental regulation for cannabis that have been developed; ideas that our communities have been advocating for decades in our environmental advocacy. The base-line of our thinking is that we need policies that actually protect the streams and river, the forest ecology, farmlands and our greater climate.

The water forbearance program and waste water discharge program meet many of these goals. But the new state proposals don't actually better these environmental protections regionally. Extending the forbearance period until early April does not actually protect river flows – as there are still significant flows in the river. The setback of 150 feet from any streambed does not (always) protect streams from waste discharge from garden sites.

We need to have performance standards that we can meet in regional specialized manners. We have a much more contoured landscape and we have a diverse and small scale agriculture model- that is much more environmentally sensitive that large agriculture models. If water protection is the goal – the amount of oil and gas, and pesticides sprayed, dust created, and infrastructure needed on centralized industrial farms far outweigh the impact of smaller farms. Not to mention the socio-economic consequences of centralizing market share away from our rural community- that which we have relied on for our family's basic needs sustenance.

Please consider all the impacts of your decisions on our communities here in the North Coast of our great state. Our intention is to show the rest of California how to live an environmentally sustainable lifestyle- as a solution to many of the issues our industrialized communities face. But we cannot be transparent and successful in this task unless we can remain compliant successful cannabis farms. May we all change toward a more evolved State of California.

Sincerely, Rio Anderson, Lady Sativa Farm