

A Letter to the Editor titled “*Enforce Measure V*” was published in the Ukiah Daily Journal by Naomi Wagner on November 29, 2017.

Mendocino Redwood Company found a number of comments that would benefit from additional correction, clarification or commentary which are presented on the right side of the page in green italics.

Substantial factual information on Mendocino and Humboldt Redwood forests and its practices are available at www.MendoCo.com. Wherever possible we have provided direct links to specific material on our website to help the readers have easy access.

<p style="text-align: center;">Text of Article <i>Text of article begins below, spaces placed to allow facts to line up with text of article.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Facts about Mendocino Redwood Company</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">[BEGINNING OF ARTICLE BELOW]</p>	<p>Mendocino Redwood Company (MRC) was created in 1998 from lands purchased in Mendocino and Sonoma county with the publicly declared mission to be good stewards of the forest and at the same time run a successful business. We have made significant progress in that regard:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adopting policies to make MRCs forestlands Forest Stewardship Council® FSC® (C004495) certified (since November 2000); 2. Adding more than <u>1 billion board</u> feet of redwood and Douglas fir trees by lowering the rate of harvest; 3. Defining of old growth down to the level of an individual tree, along with implementation of a policy to protect all individual old growth trees across our property; 4. Elimination of traditional clear cutting from our property; 5. Long term investments to improve habitat for fish across the property by controlling or holding back more than 1 million cubic yards of sediment (more than 100,000 dump trucks of dirt) from the coastal streams flowing through our forest; 6. Removal of more than 36 long time fish barriers, increasing fish bearing streams by more than 20 miles. 7. Operating as an open and transparent business; including an open invitation to take interested individuals anywhere in the forest; 8. Completing a substantial rebuild of our Ukiah sawmill, assuring that Mendocino County will have infrastructure in the processing of wood products for many years to come; and 9. Employing about 300 skilled employees in Mendocino County earning family-level wages and benefits.

[BEGINNING OF ARTICLE]

Dear Editor:

In the SF Chronicle's 10/20/2017 front page story, "Disease to trees pointed at in fires", forest ecologist and director of the UC Berkeley Forest Pathology and Mycology Laboratory, Matteo Garbelotto, states that trees killed by Sudden Oak Death (SOD) are "basically match sticks" that make hotter wildfires spread faster and warns that California's forests are now prone to more intense fires "specifically because of large swaths of infected oaks and tanoak", that, "even when not dead...have a much lower moisture content than a healthy tree".

Substitute the word Imazapyr for Sudden Oak Death and you'll have an identical snapshot of thousands of acres of forest lands in Mendocino and Humboldt Counties: huge swaths of standing dead and dying tanoaks and other hardwoods. These trees have been intentionally killed by Mendocino and Humboldt Redwood Company (MRC/HRC) using a method known as "hack & squirt" to inject the cell-disrupting chemical into the trunks.

[ARTICLE CONTINUES]

The treatment of tanoak to restore the natural balance of conifer to hardwood is a tool used for decades across the county, the country, and around the world. Small private landowners, industrial landowners, and state landowners all use this tool to achieve this goal in a careful and controlled manner according to state regulations. Mendocino and Humboldt Redwood Companies additionally seeks Forest Stewardship Council certification for its forest management activities. This third party certification, born out of standards established in the 1990s by environmental groups, has been achieved by MRC for 15 consecutive years and HRC for 8 consecutive years.

MRC and HRC were created from lands purchased in Mendocino, Humboldt, and Sonoma counties with the publicly declared mission to be good stewards of the forest and at the same time run a successful business. This set a different, sustainable and better path from the legacy of previous owners. This legacy includes tens of thousands of acres of redwood and Douglas fir forest that are now dominated by tanoak. MRC and HRC are committed to restoring these forestlands to the natural balance of conifer and hardwood.

Beginning in 1998, when MRC was established, we spent several years on a variety of methods to treat tanoaks (including an ill-fated and expensive effort to make tanoak flooring). After much effort, we concluded the most effective way to bring back a healthy conifer forest in our lifetime was to treat tanoak, selectively, carefully, in the woods, literally tree by tree.

As the trees break down over many years, the branches form a dry, tinder-packed cone just waiting for an ignition source and a breeze to spark a firestorm every bit as ferocious as the recent fires in Wine Country.

[ARTICLE CONTINUES]

Treating tanoak involves using herbicide (about two cups per acre) that is injected directly into the trunk of tanoak trees, following a cut made in the bark. The treatment results in trees dropping most leaves in six to nine months (depending on the time of year), and beginning to fall down within three to four years. After several years, the treated trees largely decompose and their biomass is added to the duff layer of the forest. The treatment of tanoak reduces competition for sunlight and water allowing redwood and Douglas fir trees to thrive.

CalFire, a Lead Agency on forest regulations, independently reviews and verifies all Timber Harvest Plans (THPs). THPs are considered a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)-equivalent Environmental Review Document. Among many things, CalFire reviews THPs for fire safety and requires mitigations where appropriate.

The restoration of the forest can occur while providing safety to firefighters and adjacent landowners. There are many examples of wildland fires where firefighters successfully and safely controlled fires in and adjacent to areas where tanoak had been treated. A few examples include the 2008 Mendocino Lightning Complex fires, the Comptche Fire, and the Lodge Fire. In some instances, the fires were controlled in tanoak treatment areas.

In fact there is a lack of correlation between tanoak treatment and fire safety. http://www.hrcllc.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Lack_of_Correlation_to_Fire_Intensity_in_Treated_Tan_Oak_Stands.pdf

MRC has reviewed its internal policies to encourage fire safety. These include procedures and processes we have used for more than a decade, such as:

- a. Partnering with communities to place dedicated fire-water tanks, improve egress for remote neighbors and coordination of activities with local fire districts.
- b. Working in Sacramento to encourage investment in Mendocino county infrastructure through the return of taxes paid locally and deployment of CalFire resources.
- c. Donations of time, equipment and money to Volunteer Fire Departments.

MRC strengthened its practices to improve coordinating with local fire districts, fire experts, climate experts and CalFire on pilot projects for fuels hazard reduction and additional road access in the remote parts of the County.

Unlike the pathogen-infected oaks, the herbicide-killed trees are suspected by many, especially firefighters, first responders and rural residents, to release toxic materials when burned, posing health hazards similar to urban fires.

Why is it a problem if the oaks die naturally from disease but no problem if they're deliberately killed with lethal chemicals? Why does Calfire, the same agency that fights the fires, also approve commercial timber harvest plans they know will intentionally kill even more tanoaks than SOD, in addition to those already killed by it?

Already vulnerable to a disease that takes advantage of forests weakened by climate change, hydrologic changes and acidification, oak trees face a double whammy of pathogen and poison that could threaten Tribal gathering rights and ultimately the specie, (*Notholithocarpus densiflorus*) itself, whose range is limited to Oregon and California.

In June 2016, Mendocino County voters approved Measure V by a 63% majority, declaring the intentional leaving of dead standing trees a public nuisance and requiring them to be cut down within ninety days, but the measure has gone unenforced under threat of a lawsuit by MRC. Public outcry and protests to Rain Forest Action, the certifiers, has so far not moved the green-certified Company to phase out herbicides as promised nor to follow current law by removing the dead trees clotting its 200,000 acre properties.

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The US Forest Service has conducted research on the presence of herbicides in smoke when treated areas of the forest burn. The research included five different herbicides including Imazapyr (the herbicide MRC uses in treating tan oak). The research concluded herbicide residues is absent in the smoke when treated areas of the forest burn. For more details on this research see the actual document on MRC's website at:

<http://www.hrcllc.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/imapazyrandfire.pdf>

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When Mendocino and Humboldt Redwood Companies embarked on a tanoak management program to restore the redwood forest, an internal study was conducted to determine the natural level of tanoak in a redwood forest. Old growth forests were inspected to determine this level. The tanoak management program reduces, does not eliminate, the level of tanoak to that found naturally. Additionally, tanoak is not managed in locations where tanoak is the naturally occurring species. These generally occur on sites with rocky soils or hot, south-facing slopes.

After reviewing state and local laws regarding public nuisance (Measure V states intentionally killed trees left standing constitute a public nuisance) Mendocino Redwood Company determined it was exempt from public nuisance determinations in regards to standing dead trees. See the Mendocino Redwood Company letter to the County of Mendocino at http://www.hrcllc.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Ltr.-CAngelo_MendoCo_7-6-16.pdf. Mendocino Redwood Company has yet to initiate legal proceedings on this matter nor has it threatened to do so.

Mendocino Redwood Company is constantly looking for alternatives to herbicides (tried unsuccessfully using several other methods) and continue to participate in research to find ways to reduce its use on our lands. Forest restoration to conifer stocking found historically is important from a business standpoint but also a habitat standpoint. When historical conditions are achieved (which includes a level of hardwoods in the forest) herbicide use will be greatly diminished. This has already been achieved on a significant portion of Mendocino and

<p>MRC/HRC's owners, the influential San Francisco Fisher family, minimize the problem and justify the practice by the bottom line—poisons are cheaper than manual removal. MRC foresters prefer commercially profitable redwoods. But the tanoaks are performing important ecological services, holding the erosion prone soils of clear cuts, providing food and habitat for wildlife and acorns for traditional Indigenous gathering.</p> <p>Although Measure V addresses only the fire danger from dead standing tress, MRC lawyers contend it is invalid under State herbicide law. An opinion from the Attorney General's office was requested six months ago but has not yet been answered. Instead, a committee has been set up to review the matter.</p> <p>Meanwhile, MRC continues to apply herbicides at a rate almost eight times greater than all other regional timber companies combined.</p> <p>Call or write your Supervisors and representatives to demand enforcement of Measure V.</p> <p>[END OF ARTICLE]</p>	<p>Humboldt Redwood Company lands.</p> <p>When Mendocino and Humboldt Redwood Companies embarked on a tanoak management program to restore the redwood forest, an internal study was conducted to see what the natural level of tanoak is in a redwood forest. Old growth forests were inspected to determine this level. The tanoak management program reduces, does not eliminate, the level of tanoak to that found naturally. Additionally, tanoak is not managed in locations where the forest only grows tanoak. These generally occur on sites with rocky soils or hot, south-facing slopes.</p> <p>Both companies use harvest methods in lieu of the clearcut method. All portions of the forest entered for harvesting use the selection method where trees are harvested singularly or in small groups, or use a method to get the forest to a point this method can be used.</p> <p>After reviewing state and local laws regarding public nuisance (Measure V states intentionally killed trees left standing constitute a public nuisance) Mendocino Redwood Company determined it was exempt from public nuisance determinations in regards to standing dead trees. See the Mendocino Redwood Company letter to the County of Mendocino at http://www.hrllc.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Ltr.-CAngelo_MendoCo_7-6-16.pdf.</p> <p>The County of Mendocino chose to consult with the State Attorney General's Office as to the legality of Measure V. An opinion has yet to be rendered from this office.</p> <p>The treatment of tanoak to restore the natural balance of conifer to hardwood is a tool used for decades across the county, the country, and around the world. Small private landowners, industrial landowners, and state landowners all use this tool to achieve this goal in a careful and controlled manner according to state regulations.</p> <p>Mendocino Redwood Company conducts more tanoak treatment than other ownerships in the county because it is the largest landowner in the county.</p> <p>MRC was created in 1998 from lands purchased in Mendocino and Sonoma county with the publicly declared mission to be good stewards of the forest and at the same</p>
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time run a successful business.

We are working hard to restore the forest we own and set an example for other forest owners, managers and regulators to be good stewards of the forest and at the same time run a successful business. We have made significant progress in that regard:

1. Adopting policies to make MRCs forestlands FSC® certified (since November 2000);
2. Adding more than 1 billion board feet of redwood and Douglas fir trees by lowering the rate of harvest;
3. Defining of old growth down to the level of an individual tree, along with implementation of a policy to protect all individual old growth trees across our property;
4. Elimination of traditional clear cutting from our property;
5. Long term investments to improve habitat for fish across the property by controlling or holding back more than 1 million cubic yards of sediment (more than 100,000 dump trucks of dirt) from the coastal streams flowing through our forest;
6. Removal of more than 36 long time fish barriers, increasing fish bearing streams by more than 20 miles.
7. Operating as an open and transparent business; including an open invitation to take interested individuals anywhere in the forest;
8. Completing a substantial rebuild of our Ukiah sawmill, assuring that Mendocino County will have infrastructure in the processing of wood products for many years to come; and
9. Employing about 300 skilled employees in Mendocino County earning family-level wages and benefits.

MRC is regulated by seven (7) state and federal agencies, including CalFire. Additionally, MRC voluntarily subjects itself to third part verification of forest practices under the guidelines of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC®) and has done so since 2000. We publish our inventory and many other details of our forest management on our website It is straightforward to find information on our management of the forest. From our inception we have encouraged transparency and we have a publicly stated policy of taking anyone to anywhere on the property to

	<p>see our practices first hand. Additionally, we post our inventory and other forest facts on our website. You can find more information at www.mrc.com.</p>
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