

## PARAMILITARY RAID ON RAINBOW RIDGE

A long-standing logging road blockade defending the Rainbow Ridge in the Mattole River watershed was raided by paramilitary-style Lear Assets Management on Sunday, July 22. The Lear operatives raided the tall tripod road blockade on Long Ridge, immediately threatened the two locked down forest defenders with tasers and called Humboldt County Sheriff's to arrest them. They also stole survival gear, and posted 24/7 security at the blockade. On Wednesday, July 25, the security operatives threatened a forest defender who was staffing a tree sit nearby with a forced and dangerous extraction from the tree, had her arrested, and dismantled the tripod blockade. The blockade and tree sit were erected a month ago to prevent the timber company from beginning operations.

The lockdowns occurred at "Monument Gate" – five miles up the mountain from the town of Rio Dell to prevent Humboldt Redwood Company (HRC), formed with the assets of the bankrupt Pacific Lumber Company (PALCO), from gaining access to the Rainbow Ridge area of the Mattole River watershed, an area protected by community direct action since 1998. Where HRC has two active Timber Harvest Plans to log in un-entered Douglas fir forests.

Rainbow Ridge is in the most seismically active region in the continental U.S. and is vital habitat for rare and endangered species such as the Pacific fisher, Coho salmon, Northern goshawk, Golden eagle, Northern spotted owl, and a large distinctive type of old-growth-dependent medicinal fungus, the agarikon. The area contains over 1,100 acres of ancient Douglas fir and hardwoods. Industrial timber operations such as those undertaken by HRC can be especially damaging because of the area's highly unstable soils and steep, landslide-prone terrain. HRC failed to report a recent and severe landslide to the state in its required impact assessment of the area that it now wants to log. Forest defenders are vital in stopping logging trucks and crews from moving in to begin felling trees.

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## APPROVED THP: NEVER GOOD ENOUGH!

Driving down Seely Creek Road, at 1 o'clock in the afternoon on a day that temperatures rose to over 100° I saw a Great Horned Owl sitting on a low branch not far from the road. An owl who's life was in upheaval, displaced, made homeless, by a tragic redwood logging operation that our community didn't see coming. The cool, shady grove of redwoods, slaughtered the day before, were laying on their sides baking in the heat.

In this day and age, cutting redwood, which is milled into planks for suburban decks, planter boxes and trellises, is like slaughtering elephants for their tusks, rhinos for their horns, and pangolins for their scales.

Seely Creek, a tributary of Redwood Creek, in the South Fork of the Eel River watershed, was until now, blessed with one of the finest stands of redwood outside of the park system in southern Humboldt. The kind of grove Save the Redwoods often acquires. If we'd only known the former owner was selling out.

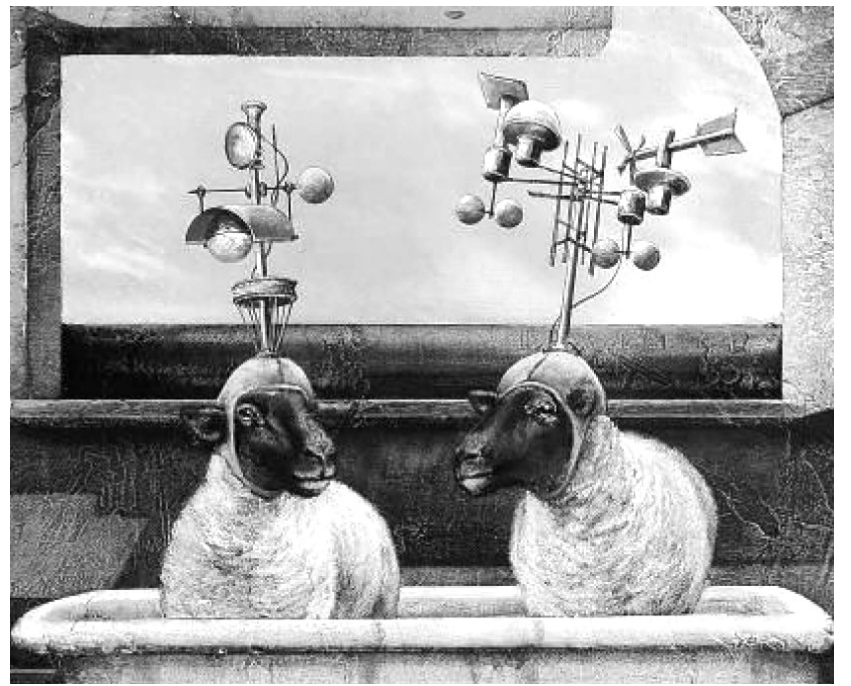
A neighborhood full of so called environmental activists got blindsided. We were heartbreakingly hoodwinked by a smooth talking, bullshitting, son of a hippie. We allowed this tragedy to occur because we weren't paying



attention, and we were all friends with his dad. We took his son at his word. A harsh lesson learned.....Never, ever trust the son of a hippie.

He told us he was going to do a light eco groovy, sustainable, long term NTMP (Non Industrial Timber Management Plan) with an enlightened forester who once lived in our watershed. Visions of single tree select harvest, on areas with gentle slopes. Instead he hired Steven Hohman and associates, who were already known in our neighborhood, for another THP submitted a few years earlier. A THP (Timber Harvest Plan) where numerous forest practice violations were discovered, including sediment bulldozed into crossings, and a diesel spill. The site looked like drunken toddlers had been driving the heavy equipment, and 40 acres of redwood forest were left in a shambles.

**'Never Good Enough' Continues on page 16**



## WAR ON CANNABIS CONTINUES

In Southern Humboldt County, it's a total war zone, it even sounds like it some days. During the week instead of enjoying the enchanting sounds of the old growth forest, you hear choppers working incessantly against farmers. Instead of a calm river, we hear the ongoing groan of the 101 freeway riddled with semis transporting slaughtered trees and other corporate goods. This is our "future of sustainability" the county claims-yeah. It was always offensive rhetoric, laced with "world-class hypocrisy" when government force-fed small, war-resisting, peace-loving farmers that they were harming the environment by cultivating medicine (aka food). All while the same government supports and defends massive clear-cut chemical operations, freeways, the oil industry, wars and environmental degradation.

Greenfuse has reported for months on the most recent propaganda campaign surrounding the attack on small farmers, via abatement notices and raids. Last week KMUD aired an interview with John Ford director of The Planning and Building Department, addressing some of these concerns. Ford states, "We are going to continue to send out [Notice to Appear letters- AKA abatement orders]... **Our objective is to hit every single un permitted cultivation site.**"

Ford also contradicted much of what his own department's workers reported to many farmers and Greenfuse last month (regarding greenhouse deconstruction permits, greenhouse permitting for R-1 residential, etc. zones, the 10x12 sq. ft. limit wasn't mentioned, and 215 laws were vague and misleading). The incongruity of official's statements highlights how difficult it is to follow mysterious and confusing laws, which are being regulated in full force. *How are citizens meant to follow rules that the enforcers of those rules, can't keep straight themselves?* Up until last month District 2 Supervisor Estelle Fennel was telling people that they could cultivate lawfully under an interim permit in 2018, without the state permit, which turned out to be false, and inconvenient news for folks in July/Aug (full-term mid-season).

An anonymous abatement recipient who was **not** cultivating at the time she received the letter, voiced similar concern. Kelly Lincoln reports her statement addressed to the Board of Supervisors and Planning Dept., "I would like to say that **your decisions have real huge effects on people, and this desire to be ahead of where CA is going to be with the legalization of marijuana, and what compliances you think people need to have, has not proven to be a positive for the people of Humboldt County. The process of becoming compliant, from what I can see of family members and other community members is not clear-cut, it is not easy and changes constantly.**"

Having had extensive conversations with abatement recipients all over the county, I noticed they all have one thing in common- they are utterly blown away by what the county is doing to the heart of the community. Many ask 'what does the county expect so many of us to do for work without cannabis?' 'Has anyone considered the economic impact at all of their actions?' 'What about our non-profits?' 'How will we support our families without basic income which has sustained us for generations?' Ford and Fennel both continue claiming that people won't lose their properties, yet they don't seem to be offering to pay anyone's bills, or reducing fines and costs either.

**-'War' Continues on page 14**

## IT'S NOT TIME TO CELEBRATE

Scott Pruitt Environmental Protection Agency chief ended his reign over environmental destruction last month with a resignation letter:

*"My desire in service to you has always been to bless you as you make important decisions for the American people. I believe you are serving as President today because of God's providence. I believe that same providence brought me into your service. I pray as I have served you that I have blessed you and enabled you to effectively lead the American people. Thank you again Mr. President for the honor of serving you and I wish you Godspeed in all that you put your hand to. Your Faithful Friend, Scott Pruitt."*

This was one of Scott Pruitt's failings, as a public servant, in the letter there is no mention of serving the American public. He's saying he's serving a president. That's not his job. His job as the EPA administrator is to serve the American people, to protect American public health from pollutants, from water pollutants, from air pollutants. And there is no mention of that in his resignation letter. There's also no mention of his scandals in his resignation letter.

Now a 'more composed' coal industry lobbyist is taking his place at the EPA. President Trump named EPA deputy administrator Andrew Wheeler — whose beliefs on environmental protection are as radical as Pruitt's. In 2017, just months before being nominated as deputy administrator, Wheeler was still lobbying for Murray Energy, a major coal mining company that has paid millions in fines and penalties for contaminating waterways in Ohio, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania with coal slurry

and discharge. Wheeler earned more than \$3 million lobbying for Murray Energy in his role as lobbyist, Wheeler also attended a meeting with Energy Secretary Rick Perry in March 2017 where Robert Murray presented Perry with an action plan that would directly benefit his coal company.

Andrew Wheeler began his career in environmental law at the EPA, as a special assistant in the agency's toxics office during President George H.W. Bush's administration.

- Spent years playing various roles on the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, which oversees the EPA, drafting regulations on chemical safety, air and water pollution and climate change — generally seeking to reduce government regulations on industries that generate greenhouse gases.
- Served as longtime aide to Sen. James Inhofe, R-Okla., whom you may recall from the 2015 floor speech in which he rebutted climate change science with a snowball.
- After leaving Congress, worked for years as a lobbyist for some of the largest coal, chemical and uranium companies in the U.S. — including the uranium mining firm that pushed for the reduction of Bears Ears National Monument, which is near one of its processing facilities.

Wheeler will become the agency's acting chief and because his personal quirks promise to be more low-key than his predecessor, will continue the same policies with much less scrutiny. "I have no doubt that Andy will continue on with our great and lasting EPA agenda," Trump tweeted confidently "We have made tremendous progress and the future of the EPA is very bright!"

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