

January 17, 2016

Dear Humboldt Water Quality Board,

I, Lisa O'Keefe, recently attended a meeting with a representatives of your board, Matt St. John, and Fred Blatt, head of Non-point Source and Surface Water Protection, to discuss the pending actions by your board to address the continuing sediment from current and past logging in the Elk River area. I and my family are new members of the Elk River Community and just entered into this difficult situation. My understanding is that the only time in the past 20 years that the river sediment has decreased is when there was a cessation of logging during the bankruptcy of Pacific Lumber Co. when the ownership changed hands to Humboldt Resource Company from 1997 to 2002. I understand that there were sediment records taken during these years that indicated a 59% decrease in deposits from years prior to this "break" in logging activities. All other facts and attempts to tug at heart strings aside, it appears that the only real positive change occurred when logging stopped and the natural process of organisms to repair and thrive began to emerge in this battered watershed. When logging resumed, sediment deposits immediately returned to their former levels of disrepair.

People, water is the source of life! If you are in any real position to protect and restore water sources, please do so. Short-sighted activities of big Industry will continues to threaten our resources and, sadly, have whittled away at our common sense understanding of what we need to survive. Please stand up for clean resources – all of them – and, today, I am asking you to stand up for the Elk River. Please prohibit logging in the Elk River by Humboldt Resource Company for at least 3 years. Allow this time to see if deposit levels change and with restoration efforts, perhaps the permit stipulations presented at the meeting could be implemented down the line. As of now, the current proposed permit is insufficient to repair the damages done.

As I write this letter, I am watching the river level rise right in front of my house. Put yourself in my shoes, would you want more sediment coming into this injured river way from current logging, with the historic sediment still coming down from the hills?

Sincerely,

Lisa M. O'Keefe

Lisa O'Keefe and 6 year-old daughter, Ruby
Residents of Elk River