



Group reaches across philosophical divide

Goal: Work together on a common vision for local lands

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North Coast Dialogues — a project of the Northcoast Regional Land Trust — is relying on collaboration to develop a vision for the region's working lands.

Land Trust Project Director Shayne Green explained the effort to the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors this week, noting the long-term goal is to maintain privately owned working lands in Humboldt County.

The key is how the region responds to change. Dialogues, he said, is committed to finding a way to move forward in the face of expected change.

One of North Coast Dialogues' first steps, Green said, is to identify the major issues and challenges to maintaining production and resource land — whether it's regulations or economics.

A sample of the many identified challenges includes high real estate values compared to resource production values, impacts of the marijuana industry, balancing private property rights and the public good, and succession of ownership.

"We know that real and lasting solutions will come from a collaborative effort involving all the stakeholders," Green said.

That is one of the keys of this project, with the North Coast Dialogues working group's membership ranging from Ali Freed-

lund of the Mattole Restoration Council to Steve Horner of the Barnum Timber Co.

Richard Dorn of Dorn & Company, who described himself as a third-generation tree farmer, confirmed that the Dialogues working group includes representatives from the far left to the far right politically.

Ultimately, Dorn said, the use of data to determine what resource land goals should be — such as the conservation of agriculture land, timberland and fisheries — will be useful to the county's ongoing general plan update.

The group, Green said, is dedicated to creating a vision that will lead to action-oriented, real and lasting changes on the ground and in people's lives. That was spelled out in the group's much-debated vision statements.

Among those shared visions are a consensus that agriculture, forestry, fisheries are economically and environmentally viable and sustainable. Resource lands provide economic value and fish and wildlife habitat, open space, and are essential to Humboldt County and locally based agriculture. Forestry and fisheries are integral to Humboldt County's economy, natural landscapes and rural way of life, according to the project's brochure.

Among the identified actions are education, research, state and federal regulatory reform, collaborative communication, conservation financing and stewardship incentives and more.

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