



FRIENDS OF THE EEL RIVER

Working for the recovery of our Wild & Scenic River, its fisheries and communities.

Tuesday, August 17, 2021

For immediate release

For more information:

Alicia Hamann, Executive Director, alicia@eelriver.org (707) 382-8859

Grant Funds Now Available through Humboldt County Cannabis Mitigation Program

Friends of the Eel River (FOER) are pleased the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors has approved the Cannabis Mitigation and Remediation Grant Program. This program to fund sediment reduction projects on public and private roads serving cannabis cultivation sites in priority salmon and steelhead watersheds was the core of the 2019 agreement that settled our lawsuit challenging Humboldt County's Commercial Cannabis Land Use Ordinance.

"We absolutely want to encourage cannabis cultivators to take advantage of this program," said Friends of the Eel River Executive Director Alicia Hamann. "Everything we do to help keep dirt out of the creeks and water in the streams helps protect our salmon and steelhead from the terrible crisis they are facing."

Funds will come from an initial investment of \$1,100,000 from the general fund, and then 20% of collected fines and penalties from cannabis enforcement actions each year through 2024. Priority sub watershed identified by the County in 2018 include Minor Creek and Noisy Creek in the Redwood Creek watershed; Hoagland Creek, Butte Creek, and Little Van Duzen in the Van Duzen watershed; Salmon Creek, Redwood Creek, and Sprowel Creek in the South Fork Eel watershed; and Middle, Upper, and Headwaters sections of the Mattole River.

"These grants will support cannabis cultivators' efforts to reduce sediment pollution in some of our most important salmonid habitat" said Hamann. "Public Works has already identified a long list of high priority projects, and will be immediately using \$500,000 of available funds to improve water quality. That will be only a small down payment against the backlog of road maintenance and culvert replacement needs across these watersheds."

Proposals for funding will be due each year on October 31, with public hearings to approve funding held by the end of February. Applicants should begin proposals now, and we highly encourage consultation with Planning staff to increase their chances of being selected for funding. Supervising Planner Michael Richardson is the primary contact for this program and can be reached at mrichardson@co.humboldt.ca.us or (707) 268-3723.

###

HUMBOLDT OFFICE

707.798.6345 • foer@eelriver.org
PO Box 4945, Arcata, CA 95518

