



## BEYOND THE BAY:

### 5 Reasons You should Care about the Humboldt County General Plan

1. **Protect Watersheds and Wetland Areas:** The Humboldt General Plan Update (GPU) should include strengthened riparian and wetland buffer zones to adequately protect our fish, streams and waterways. The CA Department of Fish and Game recommends that riparian zones be at least 150 feet on major rivers, 100 feet on fish bearing streams and 50 feet on all other streams between any development, removal of vegetation or public infrastructure including new roads and the GPU should reflect these recommendations.
2. **Reducing Stormwater Pollution:** The GPU should include language requiring low impact development practices to reduce storm water pollution. The GPU should promote permeable pavement, reducing impermeable surfaces protecting riparian vegetation that removes silt and pollution from surface run-off in storm events.
3. **Focusing Development for Clean Water:** Future development should be focused in areas already served by sewer and roads, focusing development and cutting down on new roads and individual septic systems which cause erosion, sedimentation, nutrient pollution and barriers to fish migration. The GPU should preserve natural areas with open space designations which would ensure that areas will remain open space in the future while still being part of Humboldt County's character as ranchland, farmland or timberland.
4. **Maintain Floodplains:** The GPU should encourage development out of floodplains, where houses and public infrastructure could be ruined in large storm events costing the county millions of dollars in storm damage.
5. **Restoring Threatened and Impaired Water Bodies:** Since 1984, when the General Plan was last passed, many Humboldt County water bodies, including the Humboldt Bay have been listed as impaired for contaminants and sediment. The GPU should enact strict standards that would protect these sensitive water bodies from further degradation, and take steps to enforce existing regulations on development and land use activities affecting water quality.

**The General Plan is a comprehensive, long-range policy document that guides long-term development within Humboldt County. In 2004, after much public comment, the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors approved a set of Guiding Principles to guide the General Plan Update (GPU) of the 1984 Humboldt County General Plan. These principles say the plan must include: *Unambiguous natural resource protections, especially for open space, water resources, water quality, scenic beauty, and salmonids. Long-term agriculture and timberland protections such as increased restrictions on resource land subdivisions...And efficient use of water and sewer services, focusing development in those areas while discouraging low-density residential conversion of resource lands and open space.***

**However these guiding principles have been put to the side. Right now the Humboldt County General Plan is slated to be very growth and development-centric, while leaving our Bay and natural resources on the sidelines. We must ensure that the natural resources that make this place so special are stewarded. The time is now to comment on what will shape the county for the next 20-30 years.**

**Write to your County Supervisor today to share your opinion on the General Plan Update and water quality. Your comments and letters are critically important to the healthy future of Humboldt County! Address your letters to your Supervisor at:**

Supervisor xxxx  
825 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Eureka, CA 95501

For more resources call the Humboldt Baykeeper at: 707.268.8897 or go to: [www.planupdate.org](http://www.planupdate.org), and [www.healthyhumboldt.org](http://www.healthyhumboldt.org).