



Lake County Board of Supervisors

c/o Community Development Department

255 N. Forbes Street

Lakeport, CA 95453

RE: Objection to Pasta Farms Cannabis Expansion Project; Removal of 362 Black Oak Trees

Date: July 5, 2026

Dear Supervisors,

The Lake Group of the Redwood Chapter of the Sierra Club submits this letter to strongly object to the proposed expansion of the Pasta Farms cannabis cultivation operation. While the Sierra Club Lake Group has not generally been vocal in cannabis development projects, this particular project (along with a second proximate project coming before you in the coming month) raise significant issues for the Cobb Mt. Area.

Specifically, we oppose the project's plan to remove 362 native black oak trees (*Quercus kelloggii*) as part of the project. This proposed removal includes over 300 trees with a diameter at breast height (dbh) of over 8 inches, five trees over 20 inches dbh, and one heritage-sized tree measuring over 34 inches dbh.

The loss of these trees represents the destruction of a centuries-old oak woodland forest habitat that cannot be mitigated by replanting saplings, let alone acorns, as is proposed. Under normal conditions, a California Black Oak takes 45 to 50 years to reach just 8 inches dbh, and it requires over 175 to 200 years to reach the 34-inch dbh of the largest tree slated for removal. These are not merely vegetation; they are historic features of the landscape. Furthermore, black oaks are among the hardiest of our local oak species, with a life expectancy ranging between 300 and 500 years. To cut them down now is to terminate centuries of future habitat, carbon sequestration, and soil stability.



We urge the Commission to evaluate this project using the most conservative metrics of impact, particularly in light of the severe climate realities facing Lake County. The California State Climate Assessments explicitly project longer, more intense drought cycles which will drastically reduce overall water availability depleting local soil moisture much faster. This will in turn directly impair growth rates. Consequently, any acorns planted as project mitigation will grow much slower than historical averages, meaning it will take well over the standard 50 to 200 years for replacement trees to mature and recover the lost ecological benefits, let alone the seven year maintenance period proposed as "mitigation".

Removing established, fire-resilient native hardwoods like black oaks directly contradicts the climate adaptation strategies necessary to survive these climate projections. These trees play a critical role in retaining soil moisture and mitigating local heat islands, services that are irreplaceable in the face of accelerating climate change. Approving their removal for a commercial expansion is a step backward for this community's resilience, ***especially given the much more suitable areas in the county, such as abandoned grows and vineyards, that are available for such cultivation.***

We request that the Board deny the expansion in its current form and require a revised site plan that preserves these vital black oak trees.

Sincerely,

Deb Sally

Chair, Lake Group

Redwood Chapter, Sierra Club