



MENDOCINO COUNTY COUNSEL

NEWS RELEASE

CONTACT: Thomas Parker at 707/234-6885

TO: MENDOCINO COUNTY NEWS MEDIA

FR: MENDOCINO COUNTY COUNSEL

Ukiah, California...October 16, 2013

COUNTY AGREES TO RELEASE 9.31 RECORDS TO FEDERAL GRAND JURY

In October 2012, the County of Mendocino was served with federal Grand Jury subpoenas by the U.S. Attorney's Office, Northern District of California. The subpoenas requested unredacted records for every Mendocino County resident participating in a now extinguished Chapter 9.31 program. This program was run through the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office, and allowed marijuana cultivators to grow up to 99 plants under specific criteria.

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors gave direction to staff to hire outside legal counsel after the first subpoenas were received in October 2012. A motion was filed to quash the subpoenas on grounds that they were overly broad in their requests. In April of 2013, the County of Mendocino and the U.S. Attorney's Office, Northern District of California, reached a settlement to release all records of Chapter 9.31 program participants in a redacted form that was acceptable to both parties.

On September 25, 2013, the County of Mendocino was served with another set of federal Grand Jury subpoenas requesting a limited number of unredacted County records concerning the 9.31 program. The Board of Supervisors directed that the records be provided to the federal Grand Jury as requested by the subpoenas. The County Counsel's Office is implementing this directive. Federal law prohibits the County from publicly identifying the exact nature of the records requested by the Grand Jury.

"The Board desires to protect the privacy of 9.31 participants. We are glad to see that the current request for documents is much more narrowly drawn than the October 2012 request. We hope that this action will resolve any issue the U.S. Attorney's office has with Mendocino County's 9.31 program," stated Board Chair Dan Hamburg.

Released by:

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Thomas R. Parker".

Thomas Parker, Mendocino County Counsel