

“HRC’s Sad Spiral Downward” by Rob DiPerna was published in a blog on July 8, 2019.

Humboldt Redwood Company found a number of comments that would benefit from additional correction, clarification or commentary which are presented on the right side of the page in green italics.

Substantial factual information on Mendocino and Humboldt Redwood forests and its practices are available at www.mendoco.com. Wherever possible we have provided direct links to specific material on our website to help the readers have easy access.

<p>Text of Article <i>Text of article begins below, spaces placed to allow facts to line up with text of article.</i></p>	<p><i>Humboldt Redwood Company Facts Corrections, Clarifications and Commentary</i></p>
<p>[BEGINNING OF ARTICLE BELOW]</p>	<p><i>Humboldt Redwood Company (HRC) was created in 2008 from lands purchased in Humboldt county with the publicly declared mission to be good stewards of the forest and at the same time run a successful business. We have made significant progress in that regard:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><i>1. Adopting policies to make HRCs forestlands FSC® (C031337) certified (since 2009);</i><i>2. Adding more than 500 million board feet of redwood and Douglas fir trees by lowering the rate of harvest;</i><i>3. Defining of old growth down to the level of an individual tree, along with implementation of a policy to protect all individual old growth trees across our property;</i><i>4. Elimination of traditional clear cutting from our property;</i><i>5. Long term investments to improve habitat for fish across the property by controlling or holding back more than 470,000 cubic yards of sediment (more than 47,000 dump trucks of dirt) from the coastal streams flowing through our forest;</i><i>6. Stormproofing approximately 680 miles of forest roads on our ownership.</i><i>7. Operating as an open and transparent business; including an open invitation to take interested individuals anywhere in the forest;</i><i>8. Completing a substantial rebuild of our Scotia sawmill, assuring that Humboldt</i>

[BEGINNING OF ARTICLE]

In 2008, in the wake of the disastrous era of the Pacific Lumber Company under the liquidation-logging minded MAXXAM Corporation and Charles Hurwitz, the court hearings for the company's bankruptcy and dissolution of company assets provided still more melodrama. What would become of the approximately 250,000-acres of timberland?

Among the notable contenders for the old PALCO/MAXXAM assets before the bankruptcy court was Mr. Archie Aldis "Red" Emmerson, billionaire-owner of another industrial timber giant, and now truly the last of its kind in California, Sierra Pacific Industries. Emmerson himself has never met a tree that he didn't prefer horizontal and on a log truck heading to a mill.

Nearly two-decades of civil unrest and constant conflict on California's North Coast was part of the battle to protect the last of the remaining old growth redwoods on private lands. As a result of the fight against liquidation logging and, "logging to infinity," of other now long-gone industrial timber giants like the Louisiana-Pacific Corporation and Georgia-Pacific Corporation in Mendocino County, the bankruptcy court, and some would say, the State of California itself, had no further appetite for a continuation of the strife that would almost certainly arise if the old PALCO/MAXXAM assets were awarded to Red Emmerson and SPI.

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County will have infrastructure in the processing of wood products for many years to come; and

9. *Employing more than 300 employees contributing a payroll of more than \$23 million and another \$75 million paid for contractors, supplies and raw material purchases flowing through the local economy*

Enter here another competitor for the old PALCO/MAXXAM assets, organized under a conglomeration of interests known as Marathon. The Marathon group was organized by the San Francisco-based Fisher Family, (who also own the Gap, Old Navy and the Banana Republic), in the same manner and by the same financial interests as the entity that eventually bought out the old LP assets in Mendocino County a decade earlier, out of which was born the Mendocino Redwood Company. Eventually, the Marathon/Fisher group were awarded the old PL/MAXXAM assets in the bankruptcy and reorganization, out of which, Humboldt Redwood Company was born.

Several promises were made by the Marathon/Fisher contingent before the court as part of the bankruptcy, award, and re-organization of the old PL/MAXXAM assets that at the end of the day had EPIC and many others supporting the Marathon/Fisher group over Emmerson and SPI.

First, the group promised to harvest no more than 50-million board-feet of timber per-year off the property for the first decade of HRC's ownership and management. The old PALCO/Maxxam lands had been extensively liquidated and mis-managed during the Hurwitz era that saw intensive clearcutting, endless mazes of roads and skid-trails built hastily and with reckless disregard for the landscape. The Marathon/Fisher group that eventually created HRC knew the landscape it was purchasing was in a state of damage and disrepair, and the promise before the court reflects this knowledge and understanding.

[ARTICLE CONTINUES BELOW]

HRC since its inception has harvested less than it grows each year, resulting in an increase in the forest inventory. HRC's Sustainability Analysis shows a harvest rate of 55 million board feet per year for the first decade. The average annual harvest rate during this period has been below this level. See the HRC data sheet with this and further information about the management of our forestlands:

https://www.hrcllc.com/sites/default/files/inline-files/HRC%20Data%20Sheet_2018.pdf

The HRC Sustainability Analysis can be found here:

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The group that is now Humboldt Redwood Company also promised to not harvest old growth and to abandon traditional even-aged silvicultural systems like clearcutting.

Perhaps most importantly, the company promised, and indeed initially demonstrated a very different approach to relationships with a fractured and divided community, particularly environmental interests and forest defenders.

The stories of Mike Jani and others from the company going out into the forest to greet tree-sitters and others to encourage them to come down, or take down their blockades, and to desist with resistance, with promises that HRC was different and a brand-new day had dawned are relatively well-known and remembered.

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HRC has owned timberland including some in the Mattole River watershed for ten years. From our inception we ended the practice of clear cutting, instituted an old growth policy which protects old growth stands and individual trees across the property, among many other policies which have earned certification from SCS as sustainable under the guidelines of FSC® (C031337). Please see our old growth policy at <https://www.hrcllc.com/old-growth> and our policy on harvest methods at <https://www.hrcllc.com/silviculture-harvest-methods>

HRC has been very involved with the Mattole community regarding forest management on our ownership. Since 2008, HRC staff has conducted 13 field tours involving over 50 individuals, 6 stakeholder meetings, and over 70 email and phone conversations. Conversations continue with local neighbors and interested parties. As a result of these interactions, this document was prepared: <https://www.hrcllc.com/letters/mattole-2016-managing-humboldt-redwood-companys-ownership-mattole-river-watershed-0>

A result of this stakeholder consultation has been the establishment of a 203 acre High Conservation Value Forest on Long Ridge, located in the Mattole River watershed. This HCVF has a stand structure unique to the watershed with the presence of a significant amount of old growth trees. It is important to note the HRC old growth policy also retains individual old growth trees even when they are located outside of a designated area such as a HCVF.

For HRC, this temerity and community credibility and cache' could have carried the company for many decades, had the behavior it illustrated continued to match the talk and promises before the bankruptcy and reorganization court. Sadly, the company seems to simply have become inpatient, and the not-so-subtle reorganization of the HRC local decision-making hierarchy where Mike Jani fell into the background, and former employees of Red Emmerson and SPI were brought in to run the show and tighten up the ship.

A little over a decade after the awarding of the old PL/MAXXAM assets to what is now HRC there are numerous indicators of alarm and concern. First, in the wake of the PL/MAXXAM era, there were two only two watersheds in which HRC could voluntarily step into snares and begin to erode the cache', credibility, and trust it had initially worked to build. These are Elk River, and the Rainbow Ridge area of the Mattole.

In Elk River, instead of working diligently with war-torn residents and other interests to give the heavily-impacted watershed a much-needed break from industrial-scale logging, HRC has taken a page, and then some, right out of the PL/MAXXAM playbook and began to execute it. HRC has fought, battled, argued, disavowed, and whined incessantly about the absolute imperative, necessity and "right," to log in Elk River.

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In a case of Deja vu' all over again, HRC even astounding hired, and still retains, the very same attorney once used by the old PL/MAXXAM to fight with the Regional and State Water Boards and conservation interests, using the very same, exact, tired old arguments that have been proven wrong in state courts over and over again for a decade and a half. Even as recently as June 19, HRC and its attorney were before the Regional Water Board fighting tighter water quality controls in Elk River, whining about the burden of regulation and claiming "takings," of its property.

In the Mattole, HRC not voluntarily stepped into snares, but set those snares for itself, and brazenly appears to be thumbing its nose at EPIC, the Lost Coast league, and others as it purposefully stomps its way into metal-toothed pelt-mammal traps. HRC has stubbornly refused to engage with and work out a collective solution to the conflict over the forests in the Mattole, despite many-a promises made and warm-and-fuzzy conversations had over dog-and-pony show field tours and beer-and-pizza woosings.

Today, HRC operates in a black-box, even for regulatory agencies like the California Department of Forestry. HRC operates under a plan approved for PL/MAXXAM by CAL FIRE when it became clear that EPIC's lawsuit against the state's approvals that were part of the 1999 Headwaters Agreement would prevail, which it eventually did.

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HRC has been in discussions with the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board regarding their permit for over a year. These discussions are ongoing as HRC works to come to mutually agreeable measures to ensure water quality impacts do not occur as a result of sustainable forest management in the Elk River watershed.

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HRC has a policy since its inception 10 years ago of taking anyone one to our forest to the place of their choosing. Such tours can be requested through our website at <https://www.hrcllc.com/field-visits>.

HRC is regulated by seven (7) state and federal agencies, including CalFire. Additionally, HRC voluntarily subjects itself to third part verification of forest practices under the guidelines of the Forest Stewardship Council FSC® (C031337) and has done so since 2009.

11-years after assuming ownership, HRC operates under a plan that would allow it to harvest as much as 150 million board-feet of timber off the property using primarily clearcutting as the method.

And, 11-years later, where once HRC employees were in the forest, talking tree-sitters down and encouraging forest defenders to dismantle their blockades, HRC is instead ferociously logging in the Mattole, using private paramilitary security goons to chase, harass, starve-out and intimate tree sitters and forest defenders, while Mattole watershed elders and others get arrested by both private security goons and the Humboldt County Sherriff's Department.

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Safety of employees, contractors and trespassing individuals is our first priority. We have a fully licensed and bonded professional security group looking out for everyone's safety in the area of operations. Because someone is moving about illegally and without warning it can create unpredictable circumstance. Entering our property illegally and during active logging operations it is tremendously unsafe.

We have encouraged trespassers to come down with the offer of safe passage off the property. It is safest to come down, if they make a choice to stay in a tree, then it is safer to stay in one place rather than to

We have been told for over a decade about how HRC is and would be different, and that a brand-new day had dawned. Today, I sit at my desk contemplating if we have a case of “same as it ever was,” or, “meet the new boss, same as the old boss,” and feel quite discouraged.

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move around unexpectedly and without warning. Hopefully, they will come down and take the offer of safe escort off the property.

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From our inception we have encouraged transparency and we have a publicly stated policy of taking anyone to anywhere on the property to see our practices first hand. If you are unable to make the trip you may find videos of our activities in the forest at <https://www.hrcllc.com/videos>

Please contact HRC through their website to arrange for a tour. Additionally, we post our inventory and other forest facts on our website. You can find more information at www.mendoco.com