



## Second District candidate Fennell aims to 'provide solutions' for southern county issues

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After reporting the news extensively in southern Humboldt County for nearly two decades, radio journalist and Redway resident Estelle Fennell is making news in her bid to win the Second District supervisor seat.

In a challenge to incumbent Roger Rodoni, Fennell says it's time for a fresh approach in southern areas of the county and she wants to make sure government works for everyone.

Fennell is pledging to be a proactive advocate for Second District residents and will make every effort to seek out and listen to the residents.

"The challenge for any candidate is to hear the concerns of all the voters," Fennell said in a phone interview from southern Humboldt Friday.

For Fennell, that includes all of the diverse residents of the small communities scattered across the rural Second District, including Fortuna, Rio Dell, Garberville, Redway and Shelter Cove.

"I am the candidate willing to listen to people and also provide solutions," Fennell stated in an e-mail response to questions from The Eureka Reporter.

Fennell moved to the North Coast 24 years ago and spent the past 17 and a half years working as news director at Redwood Community Radio station KMUD, before stepping down in August.

Fennell, who said she has a good working knowledge of the issues and realities of the Second District, is drawing on her many years of experience covering issues at the local and regional level and through meetings and working with the management and staff of numerous agencies.

And she isn't shy about pointing out what she sees as one of the district's problems: Rodoni.

Fennell claims Rodoni seems unable or unwilling to be a representative who can make county government work better for people who are trying to build or attract new business and solve existing problems.

"The most important issue facing the Second District is our local economy," Fennell stated.

During his past three terms in office, Fennell said Rodoni has had a "hands-off" approach in the Second District that has caused residents to fall behind, lose jobs and has left families without job security or health care.

"Unfortunately, Roger has stood by silently as too many families in the Second District have lost

their job or are chronically under-employed.”

Fennell highlights the need to stabilize the resource based economy and ensure responsible forestry is practiced so sustainable resource based jobs are a long-term force in our economy so families can depend on job stability and their pensions and avoid having hundreds of employees laid off each winter.

And building for the 21st Century is equally important to Fennell.

Providing infrastructure for high technology industries such as redundant broadband access is needed, Fennell said, as is support for local entrepreneurs whose businesses sell their products outside of Humboldt County, which create a cash infusion into the local economy.

In addition to roads and potholes going unfixed, Fennell said businesses don't have access to redundant broadband, which she said she will proactively address.

Fennell said government has to work for all citizens, which she said means making sure basic needs are taken care of like safe roads, law enforcement, fire protection, and affordable housing.

While some work has been done, Fennell said much remains to be tackled.

Hitting on some of major ongoing issues in the county and the Second District specifically she would be faced with if elected, Fennell said the importance of a well-thought-out, well-crafted and well-informed general plan cannot be overstated.

“It's important that the general plan reflect the unique make-up, needs and resources of this county that will require a lot of hard work, but it must be done right,” Fennell stated.

And although she supports Humboldt Bay harbor revitalization efforts, Fennell said she would like to see a focus on light industrial manufacturing that will help provide good-paying jobs, rather than heavy industry, which she said presents real challenges with pollution and other impacts to the communities around the bay.

With regard to Pacific Lumber Co.'s bankruptcy-driven proposal to develop portions of its timber lands, Fennell said it will ultimately be the owners vested rights and responsibilities that will have to be weighed in the final debate.

Several “promising plans” for PALCO's reorganization are on the table, which Fennell said may see a completely different management of those properties.

Helping manage Fennell's campaign is KMUD's Kathleen Creager.

According to her campaign disclosure forms submitted to the Humboldt County Elections Office, Fennell has gathered approximately \$900 in cash donations and another \$500 in in-kind graphic design services during 2007.