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## Get the Flock Out of Del Norte County, or Not

By Kevin Hendrick: In My View September 10, 2026

Flock is a brand of Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR), an AI technology being deployed across the country. I had not thought much about the use of ALPR until a series of recent Redwood Voice articles by Jessica Cejnar Andrews caught my attention. Following are some story highlights and personal opinions.

On August 6, Redwood Voice reported that people made public comments at a City Council meeting regarding the installation of Flock cameras near Crescent City. It turns out these people were barking up the wrong tree. Flock tried to sell services to the City Police Chief. He told them he was not interested.

However, last year the Board of Supervisors approved a two-year contract authorizing the Sheriff to install six Flock cameras for a cost not to exceed \$18,000 per year. Though this decision was legally noticed and adopted, this contract was on the consent calendar so there was no discussion before the vote.

Sheriff Scott explained, “The DNSO has placed its Flock cameras at the gateways to the more populated areas of Crescent City to monitor its exit routes. They operate 24/7 and allow law enforcement to hone in on vehicles that match the description of any that may be associated with a recent crime.”

There are legitimate reasons for the use of ALPR, but people are skeptical that the value outweighs the loss of privacy. One local resident has started a Facebook group, De Flock Del Norte County, and is circulating a change.org petition to remove Flock Safety and other ALPR cameras from Del Norte County.

According to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), “Flock’s automated license plate reader cameras record and track every car that comes into its view and then uses an artificial intelligence algorithm to catalogue it. That information is uploaded to a national database that any law enforcement agency with a Flock contract can search.”

On August 8, Redwood Voice reported that there were questions about the Flock contract at the County Supervisors’ Budget hearings. Citing feedback from his constituents that ALPRs are an infringement on their Constitutional rights, Supervisor Howard called for a renewed discussion of their use.

Supervisor Starkey told Redwood Voice the budget workshop wasn’t the right venue to hash out the community’s concerns regarding ALPR, but it’s a worthwhile discussion. “If we as a community decide this is not something we want, then we have to make a decision together. I think we need to revisit it.”

In response to a question about whether the DNSO’s Flock camera information will be shared with ICE, Sheriff Scott said, “I’m sure that ICE can access Flock any time they want to. So if I just answer with a blanket, ‘Yes they do!’ I think it’s important to say that.”

I trust Sheriff Scott not to abuse this intrusive tool, but I do not trust ICE. If ICE is being assisted by technology paid for by Del Norte County, this may be a violation of State law. Local law enforcement agencies are prohibited from providing aid to ICE, except in criminal cases.

We need to take another look at this decision. The Board of Supervisors should place this subject on the agenda for the next Regular meeting so the public can learn more and share their concerns.

Kevin Hendrick is the Chair of the Del Norte County Democratic Central Committee