



# COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 3/2/2023

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File #: 23-277

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**To:** Zoning Administrator

**From:** Planning and Building Department

**Agenda Section:** Consent

**SUBJECT:**

Catch a Cloud Farms, LLC  
Assessor Parcel Number(s) (APN) 314-131-073  
Record No.: PLN-2022-17957  
Kneeland area

The applicant is seeking a Modification to a Special Permit to construct a one-million-gallon rainwater catchment pond, and Zoning Clearance Certificates for off-site commercial processing, off-site commercial propagation, distribution and non-volatile manufacturing of infused pre rolls, and a Special Permit for hosting farm tours. The parcel has already been permitted for 43,560 sf of cultivation under a previously approved permit (PLN-16541). No additional cultivation is proposed on this property, and the applicant is proposing to reduce previously approved nursery space from 4,500 square feet to 4,356 square feet. Distribution will take place in designated spaces within permitted commercial building, and will include transport, storage, labeling, packaging including making infused pre-rolls, facilitating testing, and sales to retailers for both product that is grown on-site and from other licensed operators year-round. Manufacturing and infusion include the manufacture of concentrated cannabis products by using non-volatile solvent-less extraction methods and the incorporation of cannabis concentrates or manufactured cannabis products into tinctures or pre-rolls. Farm tours will be conducted exclusively by a licensed Tour Group Operator and will comply with local and state Performance Standards for Public Accommodations. Water for onsite operations will come from rainwater catchment. There is an existing 450,000 gallon pond, a proposed 1,000,000 gallon pond, an existing permitted groundwater well. Irrigation is estimated to require 350,000 gallons of water per year. The site has an ADA accessible, commercial restroom. The existing power to the property is supplied through PG&E and a 7000w grid tied solar system.

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

That the Zoning Administrator:

Adopt the resolution (Resolution 23-\_\_\_). (Attachment 1) which does the following:

- a. Finds that the Zoning Administrator has considered the Addendum to the Environmental Impact Report for the Commercial Cannabis Land Use Ordinance that was prepared for the Catch a Cloud Farms, LLC project); and
- b. Finds that the proposed project complies with the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance; and
- c. Approves the Special Permit Modification, Zoning Clearance Certificates, and Special Permit subject to the recommended conditions of approval (Attachment 1A)

**DISCUSSION:**

**Project Location:** The project is located in Humboldt County, in the Kneeland area, on the North side of Barry Road, approximately at the intersection of Paddock Road and Barry Road, on the property known as 1001 Barry Road

**Present General Plan Land Use Designation:** Agriculture Grazing 2017 General Plan; Density: Unidentified; Slope Stability: High Instability (3)

**Present Zoning:** Unclassified (U)

**Environmental Review:** An Addendum to a previously adopted Environmental Impact Report has been prepared for consideration per §15164 of CEQA Guidelines.

**State Appeal:** Project is located outside the Coastal Zone and is therefore NOT appealable to the California Coastal Commission

**Major concerns:** None

**Executive Summary:** The applicant is seeking a Modification to a Special Permit to construct a one-million-gallon rainwater catchment pond, and Zoning Clearance Certificates to add entitlements to the parcel's operations including off-site commercial processing, distribution and non-volatile manufacturing of infused pre rolls, and a Special Permit for hosting farm tours. The parcel has already been permitted for 43,560 sf of cultivation under a previously approved permit (PLN-16541). No additional cultivation is proposed on this property, and the applicant is proposing to reduce previously approved nursery space from 4,500 square feet to 4,356 square feet. Off-site processing will consist of drying, trimming, packaging and storage of cannabis in an existing, 2,568 SF, ADA compliant shop. Distribution will take place in designated spaces within permitted commercial building, and will include transport, storage, labeling, packaging including making infused pre-rolls, facilitating testing, and sales to retailers for both product that is grown on-site and from other licensed operators year-round. Manufacturing and infusion include the manufacture of concentrated cannabis products by using non-volatile solvent-less extraction methods and the incorporation of cannabis concentrates or manufactured cannabis products into tinctures or pre-rolls. Farm tours will be conducted exclusively by a licensed Tour Group Operator and will comply with local and state Performance Standards for Public Accommodations. Water for onsite operations will come from rainwater catchment and water is made potable with reverse osmosis and ultraviolet treatment. There is an existing 450,000 gallon pond, a proposed 1,000,000 gallon pond, an existing permitted groundwater well, and irrigation is estimated to require 350,000 gallons of water per year. The applicant expects a maximum of 17 employees during peak operations. The site has an ADA accessible, commercial restroom connected to a 1500-gallon septic system. The power to the property is supplied through PG&E and a 7000w grid tied solar system. The project also involves reconfiguration of the approved outdoor cultivation area within the assessed project area. This reconfiguration involves shortening a number of greenhouses and consolidating the area into an additional canopy area.

**Distribution:** Proposed distribution activities include transport, storage, labeling, packaging, facilitating testing, and sales to retailers for both cannabis grown on the parcel as well as cannabis grown by third party permitted and licensed cultivators. Distribution areas include designated spaces within permitted commercial building. The applicant is also proposing to utilize one of the existing storage containers as an overflow storage area for distribution and manufacturing activities.

**Commercial Processing:** An existing commercially permitted ADA compliant building will be utilized to dry, trim, package, and store cannabis grown on site and off site by permitted licensed third party cultivators. The

applicant anticipates the processing building will primarily process cannabis grown on site, with minimal processing of cannabis cultivated off-site.

**Manufacturing:** Manufacturing activities include infusions, incorporation of cannabis concentrates into tinctures or pre-rolls, and non-volatile solvent-less extraction. The applicant is proposing holding and staging, pre-processing, extraction to produce products such as hash, rosins, and dry sieve materials, and post processing activities including packaging for testing and sale to licensed retailers. Byproducts of manufacturing activities will be composted, and non-compostable by products will be hauled off site by a licensed cannabis disposal service.

**Farm Tours:** The applicant is proposing farm tours between the hours of 9:00 am and 6:00 pm, conducted exclusively by a licensed Tour Group Operator. Public accommodations will include parking and restroom facilities, pathways, and the existing commercial processing building. Farm tours will only be available to adults 21 and over, verified prior to the start of the visit. Ag exempt structures will not be open to the public, noise amplification equipment will be prohibited, and visitation will exclude weddings, parties, or similar special events. The applicant is proposing to host tours conducted by a licensed third party tour company.

**Water Resources:** The previously approved project included a 450,000 gallon rainwater catchment pond, and the applicant is now proposing the construction of an approximately 1,000,000 gallon rainwater catchment pond, as well as the utilization of an existing permitted well. The applicant is proposing the construction of a 1,000,000-gallon rainwater catchment pond to reduce the use of the previously approved pond and groundwater well.

**Biological Resources:** A Biological Resources Assessment was submitted for the previously approved project, which found that the approved activities would not have substantial impacts if conducted pursuant to recommendations. Recommendations relevant to the new project activities have been included as conditions of approval (**Condition A.10**). A subsequent Botanical Survey was performed by Naiad Biological Consulting evaluating the area of the proposed 1-million-gallon rainwater catchment pond. No sensitive species or sensitive habitats were identified within the area of the proposed pond.

**Access:** The project site is accessed via a private driveway from Barry's Road, a road paved to Category 4 standard with a centerline stripe. The project was referred to the Department of Public Works, who recommended that the applicant relocate any fences and gates out of the County right of way so that vehicles will not block traffic when staging to open/close the gate, pave the existing driveway where it intersects with Barry's Road for a width of 18 feet and a length of 50 feet, and to maintain the driveway intersection with Barry's Road in accordance with the County Sight Visibility Ordinance (HCC 341-1). Recommendations have been included as recommended conditions of approval.

**Cultural Resources:** The applicant submitted a Cultural Resources Investigation prepared by William Rich and Associates that concluded that no artifacts, features, or sites which would be considered historical resources for the purpose of CEQA were identified, and tribal cultural resources do not appear to be present within the project area.

#### OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The project was referred to responsible agencies and all responding agencies have either recommended approval or conditional approval. (Attachment 5)

**ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. The Zoning Administrator could elect not to hear this item and put the decision making in front of the Planning Commission. Any decision to place this matter before the Planning Commission must be done before opening the public hearing on this project.
2. The Zoning Administrator could elect to add or delete conditions of approval.
3. The Zoning Administrator could deny approval of the requested permits if unable to make all of the required findings.

Planning Division staff is confident that the required findings can be made based on the submitted evidence and subject to the recommended conditions of approval. Consequently, planning staff does not recommend further consideration of these alternatives.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Resolution
  - A. Conditions of Approval
  - B. Cultivation Operations Plan
  - C. Site Plan
2. Location Maps
3. CEQA Addendum
4. Applicant's Evidence in Support of the Required Findings
5. Referral Agency Comments and Recommendations

Please contact Michael Holtermann, Planner II, at 707-445-7541, or by email at [mholtermann@co.humboldt.ca.us](mailto:mholtermann@co.humboldt.ca.us), if you have any questions about the scheduled public hearing item.