

March 15, 2022

Letter from Concerned Neighbors regarding Nava Ranch, Inc. Special Permit Application (PLN-2021-17162) for Commercial Cannabis Expansion on APN 107-106-006

Dear Planning Commissioners,

We, Gary Haga and LaDonna Landergen-Haga of The Honeydew Creek Original Family Farms, are Honeydew residents adjacent to the proposed Nava Ranch project. We have lived here for decades, and our family has been on this property for more than one hundred years. We support cannabis farms and are cultivators ourselves who have gone through the difficult permitting process; however, we oppose this project because the applicant is an irresponsible operator with a project that is already out of compliance and should not be allowed to expand their operation nearly 5-fold.

The operation is not in compliance with the approved Special Permit. They currently cause noise and light pollution nightly, running a loud generator and never covering their greenhouses. We see lights every night from our living room and hear their generator from our back porch. If the existing project emits noise & light that impacts neighbors & wildlife – why should they be allowed to expand nearly 500%?

Additionally, information is inaccurate or missing from the application materials. There is absolutely zero evidence to support a legitimate source of power for this massive, mixed-light project, and it is impossible that one (1) full-time employee could operate a project of this size. Water use volumes are suspiciously low. No noise study was conducted to prevent noise impacts. Additionally, no Biological or Botanical reports were made available for the public to review prior to the hearing.

Hikers, hunters, and tourists recreating in the King Range Wilderness drive directly through the proposed project site on Smith-Etter Road to access trails and campsites. The existing greenhouses are visible from the road. Do you, Planning Commission, want visitors to encounter an environmentally irresponsible operation when they are coming to enjoy the natural beauty of the Mattole Valley?

Lastly, we received notice that the project would be heard on Thursday, March 24th, at 10 a.m., not Thursday, March 17th, at 6 p.m. It is possible that other concerned neighbors received the wrong notice and are unaware of this hearing due to this clerical error. For that reason alone, the project should be automatically continued.

Specifically, we oppose this project for the following reasons:

1. No Evidence of Sufficient Power to Support Expansion

- The proposed Nava Ranch, Inc. application would expand the approved 2,500 sq. ft. of indoor cultivation and the 9,100 sq. ft. of mixed-light cultivation to 2,500 sq. ft. of indoor and 43,560 sq. ft. of mixed-light cultivation, representing a nearly 5-fold increase of the existing project cultivation footprint. The proposed project also includes a new processing building.
- **There is no evidence in the Operations Plan or the Staff Report to demonstrate sufficient PG&E power to operate the project.**
 - o What is the existing PG&E service? There are no details in the project materials. If it is a 100-amp residential service, it would be wholly insufficient to serve the proposed

project. From the 1.0 application, there was only enough PG&E to serve the 2,500 sq. ft. of indoor.

- Are we supposed to believe the applicant is getting a PG&E upgrade? As we know, a PG&E upgrade in the Honeydew Valley is not a viable option, at least not for several years.
 - Are we then supposed to believe that the entire acre will run off of solar? If so, six (6) solar panels are completely insufficient to operate the acre of mixed-light cultivation, and no other areas for additional proposed solar are identified on the map.
 - There is no estimate of energy demand calculations in the application materials that would suggest the existing service could power the project.
- The applicants already power their generator day and night, out of compliance with the original approval. We hear it from our house all day, every day. We fear that without a legitimate power source, their generator use will continue or increase with expansion of the proposed project.

2. Light Pollution & Non-compliance with Approved Permit

- As an adjacent neighbor to the proposed project site, we see the lights gleaming from their mixed-light operation nightly. I can see it from my living room window; it lights up the entire valley almost every night.
- The approved project Staff Report for the Special Permit states that “the applicant would deploy light-proof covers/traps on the mixed-light hoop houses during the use of supplemental lighting to prevent spillover” (pg. 4). This has not been occurring. With their nightly light pollution, they impact nearby biological resources (e.g., Northern Spotted Owls) and disturb the peaceful atmosphere neighbors have come to enjoy.
- **Why should we allow an existing irresponsible applicant to dramatically expand their mixed-light cultivation activities when they already cannot cover or tarp their existing operation?** The proposal is not compatible with the neighborhood.

3. Noise Pollution & Lack of Evidence the Proposed Project would meet CCLUO Performance Standards

- How is this project being approved without a Noise Study? All projects have to submit a noise study at the time of application. Why is this applicant allowed to submit a noise study as a condition?
- We live less than 600 feet from the existing operation, and it is already extremely noisy. **They run their generator nearly 24/7, which is out of compliance with their existing permit.** We can hear the generator from our back porch. We used to have peaceful nights; now all we hear is this applicant’s generator. We are very worried that, despite the conditions and requirements, allowing this already-noisy operator to expand - without evidence or data that they will meet noise performance standards - is irresponsible.

4. Employee Count

- The project only proposes one (1) full-time and up to three (3) seasonal employees for an acre of mixed-light cultivation and a 2,500-sq. ft. indoor operation, with onsite trimming & 3 cycles per year? This is completely false and ridiculous; anyone knows it takes more than four people to operate a farm of this magnitude.
- We know they already use more employees than that. From our home, we witness at least a dozen people currently operating the existing farm on some days. **How would you increase the operation by 500% and reduce employees?**

5. Low Water Use & No Calculations to Support Harvest Volumes

- Total annual water usage is proposed to be 315,000 gallons, or **6.83 gallons/sq. ft./year**. This is an extremely low water use, and honestly seems impossible, especially for the Honeydew Valley Area and for a project with up to 5 cycles per year. **The applicant should provide additional information to demonstrate how they are going to be so water efficient.**
- The approved Special Permit had a projected water use of 135,000 gallons, or 11.6 gallons/sq. ft., which is typically more along the lines of cannabis farms in the area. How are the applicants proposing to increase the footprint while reducing water usage?
- What is the point of the additional 750,000-gallon pond if water use is only 315,000 gallons? Those numbers don't add up.
- Operations Plans typically include calculations to demonstrate the proposed rainwater catchment surfaces will capture sufficient water for the proposed project. With increasingly dry winters, how is it demonstrated that this project would function in a drought year? Calculations surrounding rain catchment should have been included in the Operations Plan.

6. No Biological or Botanical Studies for Public Review

- We were unable to locate the referenced Biological or Botanical studies in the Staff Report or on Accela. How can concerned neighbors, resource agencies, & the public properly analyze this project and make informed comments without having access to the Biological and Botanical Studies? This should have been made available prior to the hearing. **The project should not be approved without the ability for the public to review missing application materials.**
- The existing project already emits light and noise at night that likely impacts wildlife. How is it demonstrated – and how will it be enforced – that this operator will not impact wildlife with a greatly expanded project?
- This is a noisy, light-emitting project on the border of the Kings Range Wilderness, a haven for wildlife. As neighbors who have lived in the valley for years, we worry that the proposed project would greatly harm our beloved wildlife. An acre of mixed-light cultivation does not belong in the Kings Range Wilderness.

7. Neighborhood Incompatibility & Safety Concerns

- We have lived in the Honeydew Valley for decades. It is our home, and we treat it as such. This applicant does not care about the community; they have never once come to say hi.
- The entire Mattole Valley community is involved in neighborhood safety and have formed a Neighborhood Emergency Services Teams (NEST) to be able to respond to emergencies as a community. Unfortunately, the Nava Ranch applicants have not attempted to join or assist with this group. As you can see in the attachment, though they live on Landergren Road, they are not involved in community safety.
- Additionally, there was a small vegetation fire on the property last year that I, Gary, helped to fight. The operators were not onsite. We successfully extinguished the fire, and the applicants never once came and said thank you.
- **The applicants and this noisy, light-emitting project are incompatible with our neighborhood and our community's safety goals.**

8. General Site Cleanliness

- The operators leave tarps, netting, and other plastic along the road for their neighbors to pick up. Since the property changed owners to Nava Ranch, I have been picking up garbage from their operation constantly. **The operators do not keep a clean site and should not be allowed to produce even more unnecessary waste.**

9. King Range Wilderness Tourism

- Smith-Etter Road is used to access numerous campsites and trails in the King Range Wilderness, including the Kinsey and Spanish Ridge Trailheads, Miller Camp, and Bear Hollow Camp, among others. The existing greenhouses are clearly visible from Smith-Etter Road, as the road runs directly next to the project site. The expanded greenhouses would be even more visible.
- Hunters, tourists, recreationists, naturalists, hikers, and campers who visit the King Range Wilderness will be driving by this site. They should not have to drive next to a polluting, environmentally damaging site in the middle of this pristine wilderness, especially when they are there to enjoy the unique natural beauty that the Mattole Valley has to offer.

10. Public Lands Setback

- The approved project included a Special Permit to reduce the setback from Public Lands to 100 feet. The Staff Report claims that, as the operation is powered by PG&E and includes measures to ensure no light escape, the project is consistent with the terms of the previously approved Special Permit for the setback reduction. However, the existing project *does* emit light, and the generator is used constantly. Has Bureau of Land Management commented on this project?

11. Road Evaluation

- The self-certified 1.0 Road Evaluation does not seem sufficient to meet 2.0 standards. Where are the improvements regarding water quality? This year I witnessed silty water running off of their property, down the road toward Honeydew Creek. This should be addressed in the Road Evaluation, and in a Site Management Plan.
- We measured the road width of Landergren Road, and it only includes 12-15 feet of pavement. It is not 18 feet all the way through.

12. Enrollment in General Order

- The Staff Report includes a condition to enroll in the SWRCB General Order. All existing operations, including this one, should be enrolled in the General Order and should have an up-to-date Site Management Plan that describes how erosion and sediment control measures are implemented onsite.
- With no Site Management Plan, it seems erosion and sedimentation are not being controlled. I have witnessed silty brown water leaving their site. The project is adjacent to Honeydew Creek, a fish-bearing stream, and I am concerned about the water quality impacts this project poses. This is something that should be addressed before the operators are allowed to expand.

13. 30' Property Line Setbacks

- Though it is not depicted on the map, the applicant's well, water tanks, and other items are currently located within 30 feet of our property line. The existing project does not meet the property setbacks as designated by CalFIRE. We believe a property boundary survey should be conducted prior to approval to demonstrate compliance with property line setbacks.

We do not believe you should reward an operator who can't cover their greenhouses, leaves trash around, and runs their generator 24/7. We have deep roots in this community and a profound love for the Mattole Valley. Unfortunately, expansion of an already out-of-compliance, noisy, light-polluting, wasteful mixed-light cannabis operation with no legitimate power source located less than 100 feet from the pristine Kings Range Wilderness and Honeydew Creek would not further the peace and safety of residents and wildlife in the Mattole Valley. Please vote to deny this project.

Respectfully,

Gary Haga and LaDonna Landergren-Haga
The Honeydew Creek Original Family Farms

Photos



Lit up greenhouses at night – from our house (Photo from March 2022)



Lit up greenhouses at night – from our neighbor's house (Photo from February 2022)



Example of trash laying around their site: plastic tarp, cultivation materials (Photo from March 2022)

2022 NEST Neighborhood Emergency Service Teams

This list of adults living full- or part-time in the Mattole Valley is for emergencies or major catastrophes. Phone numbers are for quick notification. Names/structures are to identify and help people who are injured or trapped. Neighbors check on neighbors. Neighborhood coordinators notify or account for adults in their NESTs. Parents account for children.

BEFORE AN EMERGENCY

- ◆ Pre-arrange a rendezvous with family members
- ◆ Have ready: first aid kit, food & water, flashlight, clothes & shoes, battery-operated radio

WHEN AN EMERGENCY OCCURS

- ◆ Turn off gas, and electricity, water if appropriate
- ◆ Locate family members
- ◆ Assess injury and damage
- ◆ Check with neighbors
- ◆ Community Liaison, Petrolia - Travis Howe, 629-3478
- ◆ Community Liaison, Honeydew - Claire Trower, 986-7688

**FIRES: call 911 first. Tell dispatcher which local fire company is closest.
Give good directions. Local fire companies will immediately be notified.**

Petrolia Volunteer Fire Department: call 911 first

Petrolia Fire Department (EMERGENCY): 629-3535
Petrolia Fire Department (non-emergency): 629-3558 Travis Howe, chief (629-3478)

Honeydew Volunteer Fire Company: call 911 first

Peter Marshall (499-2061) Claire Trower (land 986-7688, cell 499-4074)

Lower Mattole Valley NEST Coordinators:

Kathy Radke (629-3265) Gaby Cohen (629-3656) Amanda Malachesky (629-3614)
Sarah Balster Honeydew (834-4205)

Food and Shelter:

Mattole Valley Community Center (629-3565) Mattole Grange (629-3421)
Mattole Elementary School (629-3311, 629-3250), Honeydew School (629-3230) for children

MEDICAL: emergencies call 911

Josh Ennis MD (344-7500), Ellen Taylor PA (629-3500), Dick Scheinman MD (629-3365)
Marika Ennis MD (430-3651)

Other Numbers:

PG&E updates (1-800-743-5002)	HumCo Sheriff's Office (445-7251)
Roads (445-7421 or 1-800-427-7623)	HumCo Sheriff Search & Rescue (911)
Weather - NOAA (443-7062)	Mattole Valley Resource Center
CalFire Mattole Station (629-3344) seasonal	including emergency food (629-3348)
CalFire Weott Station (946-2215) all year	Mental Health - Monica Hubbard, MFT#111094
Burn Day (443-7665) (1-800-287-6329)	(206-409-5393 non-emergency appts)
Humboldt earthquake hot-line (826-6020)	HumCo Mental Health (1-888-849-5728)
Office of Emergency Services (268-2500)	Rape Crisis Line (445-2881)
Red Cross (443-4521)	Suicide life-line (1-800-273-8255)
Poison Control (1-800-222-1222)	Frontier local questions - Bill (786-0011)

Honeydew Post Office (629-3501)
Honeydew Store (629-3310)

Petrolia Post Office (629-3345)
Petrolia Store (629-3455)

Catalina, Maureen 499-4855	629-3699	Lyons, Linda & Ron	986-7258
Correll, Lee & Robin	986-7645	Morrison, Lisa	599-2107
Lee, Sissy	273-2549	Timber Guilder	498-1918
@*Teresa Davey	599-9727	*Claire Trower 499-4074	986-7688

Landergen Road E186 (coordinators needed)

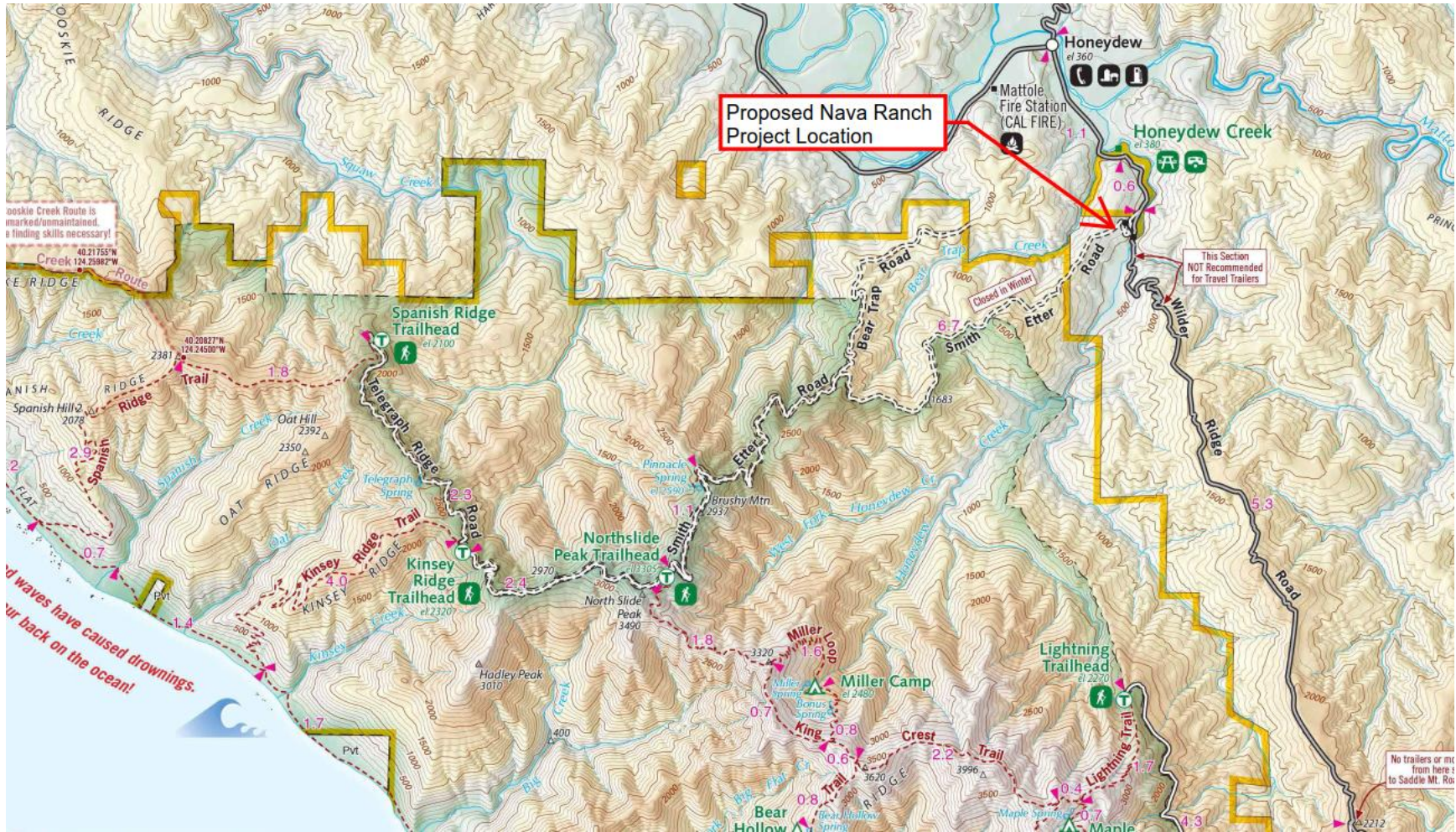
Haga, Gary & LaDonna	629-3341		
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Meaux Road E175 (coordinators needed)

Hird, Ira 599-8497 & Mariah Gregori 599-8498	@*Marshall, Peter	499-2061	
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Cathartes Peak E175 (coordinators needed)

Photo of Neighborhood Emergency Services Teams (NEST); Note the applicants on Landergen Road are absent



Screenshot of BLM Map. Note that all access to Spanish Ridge, Kinsey Ridge, Northside Peak, among others, are accessed through Smith-Etter Road, which runs directly through the existing and proposed project site.

McClenagan, Laura

From: Grochau, Augustus
Sent: Thursday, March 17, 2022 3:40 PM
To: Planning Clerk
Cc: Giannini, Trip; McClenagan, Laura
Subject: FW: Expansion PLN 2021-17162

Hey Laura and Trip,

Please forward to the commissioners as public comment.

Thank you,



AUGUSTUS GROCHAU

Planner I

[Planning and Building Department](#)

County of Humboldt

Email: agrochau@co.humboldt.ca.us

From: Linda Franklin <wl_franklin@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Thursday, March 17, 2022 3:22 PM
To: Grochau, Augustus <agrochau@co.humboldt.ca.us>
Subject: Expansion PLN 2021-17162

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

I grew up in Honeydew on AP # 107-106-006, the subject property indicated in application PLN 2021-17162.

I wish to correct the date of the pond construction, the large pond on the east side of the property was built in 1960, not 1920 as indicated in the application.

We own private property that is accessed through the BLM right of way across the middle of the property at 844 Wilder Ridge Rd., Honeydew, CA., Assessors Parcel #107-106-006. Our property is on the Lost Coast, address: 18000 Smith Etter Rd., our access is on the BLM right of way through the center of the proposed grow operation expansion. We want to be assured that we will continue to have year around access to our property without additional gates or restrictions.

Late last summer we stopped on the cattle guard that is on the BLM right of way to pick some blackberries when we experienced gun shots being fired, they sounded like they were directed at us. It was frightening, we left immediately.

Thank you,

Linda Smith Franklin

From: [Maureen Catalina](#)
To: [Maureen Catalina](#); [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: Nava Ranch expansion
Date: Wednesday, March 16, 2022 3:13:08 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Dear people,

This letter is in response to Nova Ranch Inc. record number PL – 2021–17162. Parcel number 107–1 06–006 of Humboldt county.

Just when you thought bad neighbors could not get worse, Nava Ranch Inc. is asking the county for an expansion. This project report is presented with so many false hoods, sensationalisms, and outright lies, that it has taken me hours to get through it, all 82 pages. I am outraged that I have to look at this paperwork in order to correct the numerous mistakes and assumptions throughout the document. Furthermore Nava Ranch has never complied with the existing laws on their existing Farm. I will provide proof in this letter.

I live one parcel over from this project, right on Honeydew Creek. It is the most peaceful gorgeous setting you could imagine. I have been in this location for 25 years. The night skies are pristine. The sounds are only the natural sounds of the wind, the creek, birds, insects, frogs, and untold wild creatures lurking everywhere, with the very occasional sound of a vehicle up on the county road. I love it. It's heaven. That was, until Nava Ranch moved in. I can hear their generator from my back deck. I can hear their generator from my pasture. There is no peace and quiet. They run this HUGE LOUD generator at all different hours. I live on the grid and that generator is running when the power is on. It is not saved for emergency use.

They DO NOT cover their greenhouses at night. I can see the greenhouse lights from inside of my house. I will attach photos. I can see their greenhouse lights from my back deck. I will attach photos. I also own the property next to this one at 2252 Wilder ridge Rd. and I can also see their lights and hear their generator from up there. It is like a huge amphitheater living in these mountains. Sound travels. It's loud. I can hear it over the sound of Honeydew creek and the tree frogs at night.

If you look at their original permits they only had ONE greenhouse that was 2500 ft.². All the rest of the square footage was permitted for outdoor. Yet there are three huge green houses up there right now. These greenhouses appear to be at least 25' x 100' in size. Why is that? I'll tell you why... Because they are NOT complying with what they agreed to comply with. No one comes out here to check on them. There is no enforcement of the rules! They don't follow the rules and they don't care. I have been so stressed out by this situation. It has destroyed the peace and quiet, and the night skies, in this neighborhood. In this vicinity!

Based on their track record alone, this project should be denied. And the existing project should probably be inspected immediately for all of the other infractions and laws they have broken with the existing permit.

I would like to point out some of these unbelievable statements in the staff report.

1) Rain catchment. Has anyone ever seen the rain catchment system? I don't believe they have enough roof top area to collect the water necessary for what they are growing right now. The plan does not call for another building yet they are somehow going to fill a new pond with 750,000 gallons of rainwater off of a 2000 square-foot rooftop? If Honeydew was lucky enough to get 100 inches of rain each year that would give them about 100,000 gallons of rainwater collection. The math does not add up. There is mention of a "cannabis support building" but there is no description whatsoever of the size or function of that building. Why is it even in the report? It's like wishful thinking... There's no commitment. It would take 10,000 ft.² of rooftop to collect 1,000,000 gallons of water, and that's only if it rains 100 inches every winter in Honeydew California. Who here would like to predict the weather? And what is the back up plan if it does not rain?

2) Am I expected to believe that they are going to be drying, trimming, processing, and storing everything in a 900 square-foot building? Hello! This is physically impossible.

3) One full-time employee. That's right, that's what it says, "one full-time employee". Hello! Have you read the report and seen what this person has to do on this 43,560 square-foot project? There is a month by month description of the workload on this farm. This one person is going to pull the tarps, hand water, apply fertilizer by hand gently massaging it into the soil, bring trash to the dump once a month, remove extra leaves from the plants, take care of the mother plants, start seeds or clones. Shall I go on? Is everyone at the planning department aware of what it takes to "pull tarps"? Have any of the people that are reading this report ever worked on a cannabis farm or have any experience whatsoever with farming? This isn't like going out and covering your firewood with a tarp folks. Depending on the system that is implemented, and there's no mention of this in the paperwork, it would be impossible for one person to pull the tarps on a Cannabis canopy of this size. Hand watering alone would take approximately 48 hours and that's just one time watering. Plants need to be watered every day. The last time I checked, there were not 48 hours in one day.

4) Up to 3 "seasonal" employees. What is the legal definition of seasonal? Well, let me tell you, it means a person that works for six months or less during a particular busy season. If you are having up to FIVE harvests a year, with 43,560 Square feet of cannabis, those employees are full-time, because the operation is full-time. Farming doesn't just end because you cut the product off at the base. There is always something to do on a farm of this size. It is an almost never ending process when you are a cannabis farmer with almost an acre of cannabis canopy and are implementing such processes as pulling tarps and hand watering, and basic processing. Please note that there is no mention of any of these employees doing weed eating or making things safe for the fire season. Please note that there is no housing for these employees and I don't know of any rentals available to them. The idea that only three seasonal employees are needed is absurd and unacceptable.

4) Fire safety. There are no address numbers posted anywhere for the fire department to respond properly, although they were requested to do so when they filed the first staff report on May 21, 2021. Here is a quote from our local fire dispatcher for the Honeydew volunteer fire department, Claire Trower, "The 2 fires were different people, but the last one was the current crew. They didn't call 911, but waited until someone called me (Wren saw smoke from the "Dew Store up Honeydew Creek drainage), and we went on a smoke check. They weren't prepared, and their explanation as to how it started was sorta sketchy. 5 acres of grassland burned on that fire." It is my personal understanding that the fire was started when someone poured gasoline into a beehive in the ground and lit it on fire. Brilliant. This is what we have to live with as neighbors to untrained employees. Cal Fire responded by saying "cannot support this project"

5) Will be using PG&E via a green energy program. That sure sounds lovely but that just means that you are buying energy credits, it has nothing to do with what type of energy you are actually getting. It's basically for corporations to get green energy credits towards the pollution that they create. PG&E is 2 to 4 years out on any new major hook ups in our area. The only PG&E service on that property is down by a small house next to their gate. There is no PG&E service where they want to put the green houses! I would be guessing, but I think it's about a quarter mile away at least. It's not a small project to get the PG&E service up there.

5) Handwashing and drinking water shall be brought in in plastic bottles. Do you realize how many gallons of water a day it will take for the employees to wash their hands on a regular basis? They are going to be using bottled water? This is so wasteful and so disgusting how is this even legal? How is this OK with you? It's not realistic.

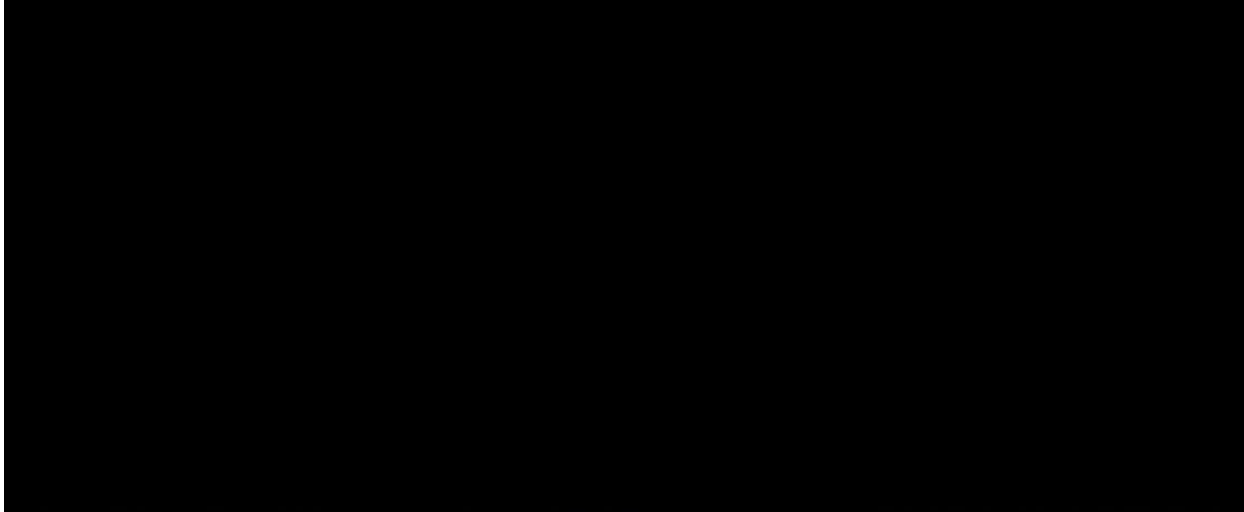
6) Access. The county road is not 18 foot wide. The self-assessment made by the applicant is clearly not accurate.

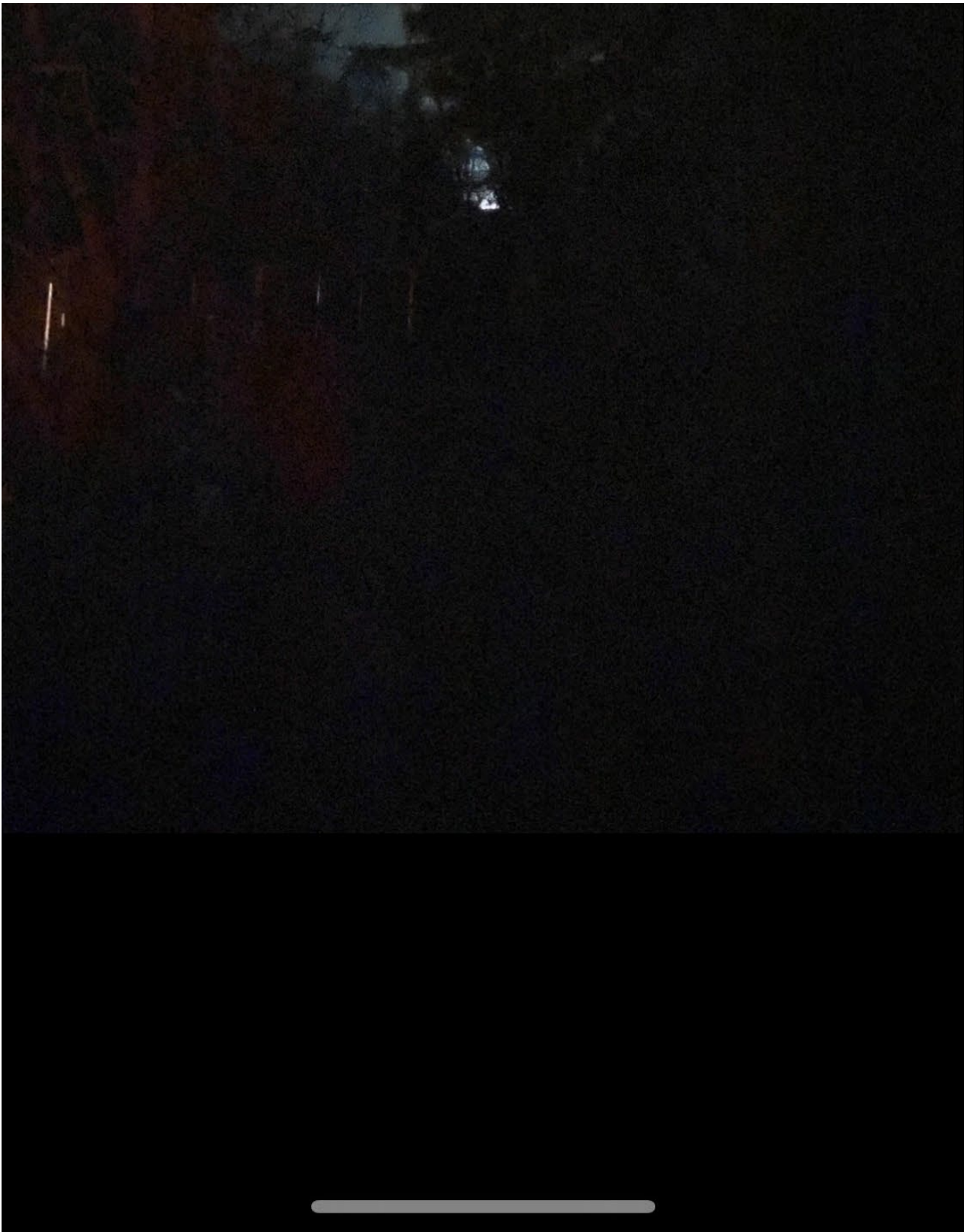
7) Planning department comment, "the cultivation of 43,560 ft.² of new mix light commercial cannabis and the conditions under which it may be operated or maintained will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare or materially injurious to properties or improvements in the vicinity" this is the final comment right above the signature line of John Ford. This comment is not correct. My health, safety, and welfare is affected by this project. Furthermore, the aesthetic value of my property is greatly reduced by this eyesore and will be detrimental to the resale value of my home. Multiple respected reports show that aesthetic degradation in any area will reduce a property's value by 30%. No one wants to live next to this commercial disaster. Please consider the actual vicinity, which means village. Our valley, our village, is greatly affected by these ugly plastic Quonset huts that are sweetly and inaccurately named "greenhouses". There's nothing green about them. We see the lights at night. We hear the generators above the natural sounds. I implore you to stop this expansion and protect the citizens that have lived here for over 40 years. I raised my children here. I donate to the local fire department. I interact with my community on personal and community levels. We have yet to even meet the owners of the project or their employees. I have paid my dues. I have paid my taxes. I deserve to live in peace and quiet, and enjoy the natural beauty of the Mattole Valley. It is my right. It's the law. The applicant has never run the existing farm properly. It has caused me so much personal stress. The lights at night and the generator at all hours should be enough to shut this operation down immediately. An inspection once a year is not enough. The local population should not have to be the ones that enforce the laws. Please stop this expansion.

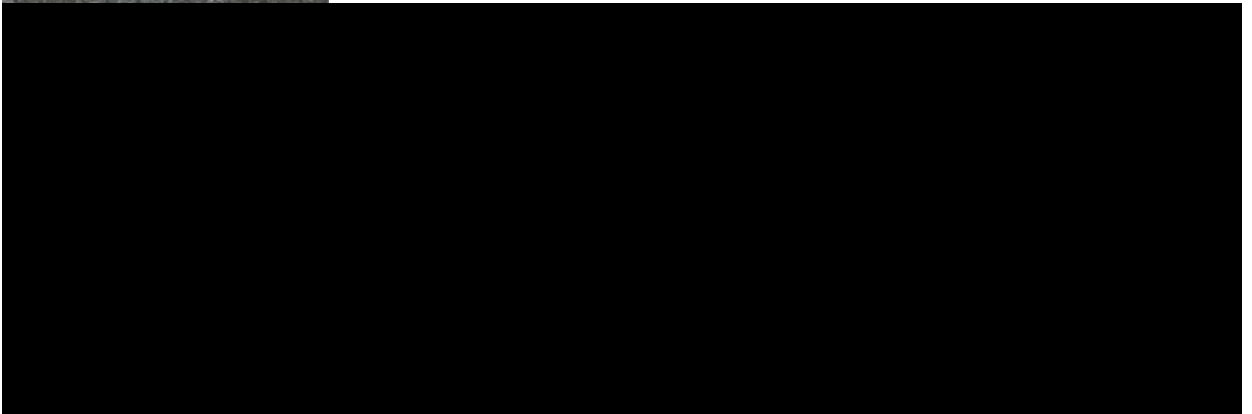
Sincerely, maureen catalina
2250 Wilder ridge Rd.
Honeydew, California
Phone 7076293699

The attached photos were taken on February 21, 2022 and on March 14, 2022. Two are from INSIDE of my home as you can see. In the right hand corner of my living room window you can see the greenhouse lit up at Nava Ranch. The other photos are from my back deck. You may have to zoom in because it's hard to take a photo in the dark, but it's quite obvious that

the greenhouse at Nava Ranch is lit up. And this was only three days ago!!!











Sent from my iPhone

April 21, 2022

Updated Letter from Concerned Neighbors regarding Nava Ranch, Inc. Special Permit Application (PLN-2021-17162) for Commercial Cannabis Expansion on APN 107-106-006

Dear Planning Commissioners,

We, Gary Haga and LaDonna Landergen-Haga of The Honeydew Creek Original Family Farms, are Honeydew residents adjacent to the proposed Nava Ranch project. We objected to the approval of this project at the March 17th, 2022, Planning Commission hearing based on the applicant's non-compliance with the original 1.0 permit (e.g., bright lights emitted into the Honeydew Valley at night, loud generators, etc.) and based on inconsistencies and incorrect information in the project materials (e.g., the proposal for a new acre of mixed-light with no legitimate power source, lack of power demand calculations, extremely low water use numbers, the proposal for 1 employee to run the entire acre of cultivation, lack of a noise study, adjacency to the King Range and potential to impact tourists/recreationists, etc.).

We have reviewed the updated Staff Report for the April 21st, 2022, hearing, and are appreciative that some of our original questions and concerns have been addressed. For instance, we are glad that the trash has been cleaned up and that the light pollution prevention mechanisms are now in place (that was not previously the case, as we could see lights every single night coming from their greenhouses – see photos). We appreciate that the County made a site visit to assess our concerns, however the county staff gave the applicant 11 days' notice prior to an inspection. We observed many trucks coming and going from the parcel during that 11-day period and suspect that generators and non-compliant items were removed.

Additionally, we still have outstanding concerns that were not addressed. We still hear the applicant's 25kW generator running from our back porch, despite claims in the Staff Report that it is not in use. There is still no information regarding the energy demand for this project, and there is still no legitimate energy source for this project (the 100-amp residential service is insufficient). We do not understand how such a large, mixed-light operation can be approved so close to the King Range Wilderness, especially since the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has significant concerns about the proposed project that were not addressed, and because some project elements are closer to the Public Lands than what was originally approved. We agree with the BLM that there should be an additional setback waiver request – currently not part of the application package, to our knowledge – prior to a public hearing on this project.

Specifically, we continue to oppose this project for the following reasons:

1. Still No Information Regarding Energy Demand

- In our previous letter, we requested calculations or energy demand estimates for the proposed project. Unfortunately, those were not provided by the applicant and are not discussed in the Staff Report. No details on light wattage, number of lights, number of fans, fan energy demand, etc., were provided to be able to make informed calculations regarding energy.
- The Staff Report claims that because lights will not exceed 6 watts per square foot that the 100-amp residential service is “likely sufficient for the minimal wattage needs of this project” (Staff Report, pg. 10). This is vague and completely unrealistic:
 - o For just the acre of mixed light alone, as a rough and conservative estimate, 6 watts per square foot equates to approximately 1000 amps of demand ($6 \text{ W/SF} \times 43,560 \text{ SF} = 261,360 \text{ SF} \cdot 261,360 \text{ W} / 240 \text{ V} = 1,089 \text{ amps}$). This estimate does not include fans or additional line losses based on the distance between fixtures.
 - This does not even begin to include energy demand from the 2,500 sq. ft. of indoor cultivation, the processing/drying activities, and ongoing residential activities.
 - The six (6) 235-watt solar panels (1,410 watts total) help minimally, but do not come close to be able to power the entire operation.
 - o Even if cultivation is staggered and only half of the cultivation is using lights at one time, as described in the staff report, over 500 amps would be required, again for just the mixed-light expansion alone (and that's still not even including indoor cultivation, residential, or processing/drying needs).

- **There is no information regarding energy demand, and 100-amp service is wholly insufficient to power the entire residence, 2,500 sq. ft. of indoor cultivation, an acre of mixed-light cultivation (even at 6 watts per sq. ft.), and processing/drying activities.**

2. Still Lack of Sufficient Power and a Legitimate Source to Serve Proposed Operation

- The Staff Report does include a Condition of Approval that states, “Prior to expanding the proposed cultivation area, the applicant shall acquire PG&E electrical service for the northern cultivation area and eliminate dependence on the generator” (Condition #5, pg. 23).
- However, as everyone is aware, a PG&E upgrade in the Honeydew Valley area is at least 4-5 years out, if it’s even possible at all.
- That would mean that this project could not build-out for years (and, as described above, the 100-amp service would not be enough to support expansion). As the applicants already run their generator out of compliance, we are very concerned that the generator will continue to be used (or even increased) to support the power demand for this project.
- The applicants already power their generator day and night, out of compliance with the original approval. We hear it from our house all day, every day. We fear that without a legitimate power source, their generator use will continue or increase with expansion of the proposed project.
- **While well-intended, the condition to obtain PG&E prior to expansion is unrealistic and compliance seems nearly impossible, leaving us with remaining generator concerns and leaving the project without a legitimate power source, even with the limitation of 6 watts per square foot.**

3. Noise

- We understand that the County conducted a site visit after the March 17th, 2022, Planning Commission meeting. Noise levels were measured from the small, 2200-watt Honda generator and levels were found to be in compliance. However, this does not address our concern because it is the 25kW WhisperWatt generator, which we hear from our back porch 24/7, that is our concern. The Staff Report claims the applicant does not use this generator. This is false, as we can hear it daily. If they are not using the 25kW generator, which generator do we hear?
- From Correspondence uploaded to Accela, it seems that Planning Staff saw this 25kW generator on the way out, which confirms that it is indeed located onsite, but did not take noise level readings from this generator.
- We understand that the 25kW generator is not being approved as a power source as a part of this project. However, the fact that it already runs 24/7 - out of compliance with their existing permit - does not give us peace of mind that this generator won’t continue to be utilized as a result of potential approval of this project.
- There is an Ongoing Requirement/Development Restriction to prepare a 24-hour Noise Study (B1, pg. 25 of the Staff Report). However, this is something that all 2.0 applicants need to submit *as a part of their application to the County*. Why is this project being approved without a Noise Study to demonstrate compliance?
- **It does not feel as if our concerns regarding noise have been addressed at all, as a Noise Study has still not been completed by the applicant and the County took noise measurements from the wrong generator.**

4. Potential Impacts to Sensitive Species (especially Northern Spotted Owls and Marbled Murrelets)

- **The proposed project is in mapped Marbled Murrelet habitat and adjacent to mapped Northern Spotted Owl Critical Habitat, with a positive Northern Spotted Owl observation located within 0.6 miles of the proposed project.**
- We appreciate that the Biological Reconnaissance Survey Report (BRSR) was made available for review (it was not available prior to the last Planning Commission meeting). The Staff Report and the BRSR state that all potential impacts to Northern Spotted Owls and other sensitive species would be mitigated based on the projects lack of noise or light pollution.
- However, this finding is based on the assumption that the project will not emit light or produce excessive noise. Unfortunately, we know this to not be the case, as we have seen light coming from the greenhouses and can hear the generators from our house.

5. Inconsistencies in the Staff Report Regarding Public Lands Setback

- The Executive Summary of the project states that the findings for the original setback reduction from Public Lands hold true for this proposed project.

- The Staff Report contradicts this however, stating that "... given that [this project] is an expansion staff believes this requires an additional setback reduction to be approved for the expanded cultivation. If this setback reduction is not approved the application for expansion would not be able to be approved and should be denied" (Staff Report, pg. 4).
 - We do not see an application or Special Permit for an additional setback reduction, however the BLM requested it and the Staff Report itself says that one is needed. **How can the Staff Report itself state that a setback reduction is needed, but a Special Permit for a setback reduction is not included in the overall permit approval?**
6. Bureau of Land Management Concerns and Lack of Sufficient Public Lands Setback
- Similar to the above comment, the BLM provided comments in an April 12th, 2022, letter that expressed significant concerns about the proposed project. While the Staff Report addresses some concerns, it does not address the BLM's concerns over the **project being located within 600' of a public trailhead** (something the original setback waiver for the approved project [PLN-12657-SP] did not discuss or address).
 - The BLM brings up this trailhead (primary access to the north end of the National Conservation Area Backcountry) as potentially being out of compliance with CCLUO §55.4.6.4.4. An adequate response to this comment should be made prior to the public hearing, and a new setback waiver should be sought from the BLM.
7. Lack of Sufficient Setback Waiver from Public Lands
- The Staff Report states that "Given that the setback reduction was already approved for the previously approved project ... and further that the proposed project will be further away from publicly owned lands than what was previously approved, staff supports approval of this application" (Staff Report, pg. 8-9).
 - This is not the case. The original setback reduction was to reduce the 600-foot setback to approximately 100 feet from public lands (PLN-12657-SP) and the proposed rainwater catchment pond associated with this project to be located 30 feet from the public lands.
 - **How is an additional setback reduction waiver not required, when parts of the proposed project are actually closer to Public Lands and the BLM has specifically requested it?**
8. Remaining Concerns Regarding King Range Wilderness Proximity and Tourism
- Smith-Etter Road is used to access numerous campsites and trails in the King Range Wilderness, including the Kinsey and Spanish Ridge Trailheads, Miller Camp, and Bear Hollow Camp, among others. The existing greenhouses are clearly visible from Smith-Etter Road, as the road runs directly next to the project site. The expanded greenhouses would be even more visible.
 - Hunters, tourists, recreationists, naturalists, hikers, and campers who visit the King Range Wilderness will be driving by this site. In fact, we have seen them already this year, parking at the gate to access the Kings Range National Conservation Area. They should not have to drive next to a mixed-light cultivation operation in the middle of the pristine Honeydew Valley, especially when the Bureau of Land Management still has unaddressed concerns regarding the project.
9. Minimal Calculations to Support Harvest Volumes During Drought Year
- Total annual water usage has been adjusted from 315,000 gallons, or 6.83 gallons/sq. ft./year, to 550,000 gallons, at 11.9 gallons/sq. ft./year. This seems more reasonable, and while we understand that during an average year there would be enough collected rainwater to support the project, we still feel that there is not enough information in the Operations Plan or the Staff Report to support the proposed expansion during a drought year.
 - In our original letter, we requested additional information regarding the proposed rainwater catchment collection potential during a drought year. Per correspondence dated March 30th, 2022, the catchment area of the proposed 750,000-gallon capacity pond is approximately 15,937 sq. ft. In the 2013 calendar year, there were only 27 inches of rain in this area. Similarly, during the 2020 calendar year, there were only 54 inches of rain. With 54 inches of rain, the pond with an area of 15,937 sq. ft. would have the potential to collect approximately 536,152 gallons of water, not accounting for evaporation. With 27 inches of rain, the pond would only collect 268,076 gallons of water, again, not accounting for evaporation.
 - With increasing drought years, it is important for projects to be drought-resilient and ensure a plan for low-precipitation years. We believe the applicants still need to provide additional information to demonstrate how they could successfully operate and account for evaporation, during a drought year.

10. Lack of Site Management Plan

- All cannabis cultivators are required to be enrolled in the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) General Order (Order WQ 2019-0001-DWQ). A Site Management Plan is required to be submitted to the SWRCB within 90 days of enrollment. According to the Staff Report, the project does not have a current Site Management Plan.
- They enrolled in the General Order on 7/25/2018 (per the California Integrated Water Quality System Project for WDID 1_12CC403232), so they should have submitted a Site Management Plan to demonstrate onsite erosion control measures within 90 days of enrollment. **They are nearly 4 years late.** This is something that should be addressed *before* the operators are allowed to expand, not as an afterthought.
- Additionally, if the project is already enrolled in the SWRCB General Order, why is it a Condition of Approval for the applicant to enroll in the general order and submit a Notice of Applicability? (Condition #10)?

11. Roads

- The applicant submitted a self-certification for access from a gravel road.
- The access to the project driveway is not paved and does not have a centerline stripe.
- The storm water from the applicants site runs down Landergen road and discharges right on top of a large landslide above Honeydew Creek and eventually into the creek.
- A road evaluation report should be prepared by an Engineer and should address and minimize stormwater and sediment discharge into the Creek.
- See attached image that shows the gravel county road and the tracks documenting the heavy traffic that occurred between the last hearing and the staff inspection.

12. Remaining Neighborhood Compatibility Concerns

- As we stated before, we have lived in the Honeydew Valley for decades. We love our home here and love the community. This applicant is not involved in any of our neighborhood activities, including the Mattole Valley community Neighborhood Emergency Services Teams (NEST) coalition to be able to effectively respond to emergencies as a community. Unfortunately, the applicant has not attempted to join or assist with this effort. As you can see in the attachment, though they live with us on Landgren Road, they are not involved in protecting community safety.

Unfortunately, despite additional information, we still oppose this project and feel that not all questions have been answered. The Staff Report appears to have some significant gaps that we do not know how to reconcile (e.g., lack of a legitimate power source for this mixed-light project). Additionally, we still hear the generator and see the lights from this project, despite claims that this is not the case. We live it and we see it.

We support cannabis farmers, as we are farmers ourselves, but we also want to protect our home and way of life here in the beautiful Honeydew Valley. We still do not believe that this project would be compatible with the neighborhood, the BLM managed accesses road leading into the pristine Kings Range Wilderness, our local wildlife, or our Honeydew community as a whole. Please vote to deny this project.

Respectfully,

Gary Haga and LaDonna Landergren-Haga
The Honeydew Creek Original Family Farms Photos



County Gravel Road used to access the property. Paved road is the driveway.



Lit up greenhouses at night – from our house (Photo from March 2022)

From: "Johnson, Cliff" <CJohnson@co.humboldt.ca.us>

Date: Tuesday, March 29, 2022 at 9:40 AM

To: Nate Madsen <NateMadsen@RainZeppLaw.com>, "Grochau, Augustus" <agrochau@co.humboldt.ca.us>

Subject: RE: Nava Ranch, LLC 107-106-006 APPS:17162 Site Visit

Thanks Nate,

This summarizes the outcome of our meeting. One last thing we need to follow up on as we noticed this generator on the way out. Can you have the applicants clarify what this generator (below) has been used for and/or what it is doing on the property? Especially given the noise complaints we need to make sure that this is addressed. This was seen in the shed just inside the front gate.



Proof of larger generator (likely the 25kW generator) onsite. Planning Staff did not conduct noise readings from this generator, and the Staff Report claims it is not in use. If this generator is not in use, then what generator do we hear from our back porch every night?

2022 NEST Neighborhood Emergency Service Teams

This list of adults living full- or part-time in the Mattole Valley is for emergencies or major catastrophes. Phone numbers are for quick notification. Names/structures are to identify and help people who are injured or trapped. Neighbors check on neighbors. Neighborhood coordinators notify or account for adults in their NESTs. Parents account for children.

BEFORE AN EMERGENCY

- ◆ Pre-arrange a rendezvous with family members
- ◆ Have ready: first aid kit, food & water, flashlight, clothes & shoes, battery-operated radio

WHEN AN EMERGENCY OCCURS

- ◆ Turn off gas, and electricity, water if appropriate
- ◆ Locate family members
- ◆ Assess injury and damage
- ◆ Check with neighbors
- ◆ Community Liaison, Petrolia - Travis Howe, 629-3478
- ◆ Community Liaison, Honeydew - Claire Trower, 986-7688

FIRES: call 911 first. Tell dispatcher which local fire company is closest. Give good directions. Local fire companies will immediately be notified.

Petrolia Volunteer Fire Department: call 911 first

Petrolia Fire Department (EMERGENCY): 629-3535
 Petrolia Fire Department (non-emergency): 629-3558 Travis Howe, chief (629-3478)

Honeydew Volunteer Fire Company: call 911 first

Peter Marshall (499-2061) Claire Trower (land 986-7688, cell 499-4074)

Lower Mattole Valley NEST Coordinators:

Kathy Radke (629-3265) Gaby Cohen (629-3656) Amanda Malachesky (629-3614)
 Sarah Balster Honeydew (834-4205)

Food and Shelter:

Mattole Valley Community Center (629-3565) Mattole Grange (629-3421)
 Mattole Elementary School (629-3311, 629-3250), Honeydew School (629-3230) for children

MEDICAL: emergencies call 911

Josh Ennis MD (344-7500), Ellen Taylor PA (629-3500), Dick Scheinman MD (629-3365)
 Marika Ennis MD (430-3651)

Other Numbers:

PG&E updates (1-800-743-5002)	HumCo Sheriff's Office (445-7251)
Roads (445-7421 or 1-800-427-7623)	HumCo Sheriff Search & Rescue (911)
Weather - NOAA (443-7062)	Mattole Valley Resource Center
CalFire Mattole Station (629-3344) seasonal	including emergency food (629-3348)
CalFire Weott Station (946-2215) all year	Mental Health - Monica Hubbard, MFT#111094
Burn Day (443-7665) (1-800-287-6329)	(206-409-5393 non-emergency appts)
Humboldt earthquake hot-line (826-6020)	HumCo Mental Health (1-888-849-5728)
Office of Emergency Services (268-2500)	Rape Crisis Line (445-2881)
Red Cross (443-4521)	Suicide life-line (1-800-273-8255)
Poison Control (1-800-222-1222)	Frontier local questions - Bill (786-0011)

Honeydew Post Office (629-3501)
 Honeydew Store (629-3310)

Petrolia Post Office (629-3345)
 Petrolia Store (629-3455)

Catalina, Maureen 499-4855	629-3699	Lyons, Linda & Ron	986-7258
Correll, Lee & Robin	986-7645	Morrison, Lisa	599-2107
Lee, Sissy	273-2549	Timber Guilder	498-1918
@*Teresa Davey	599-9727	*Claire Trower 499-4074	986-7688

Landerger Road E186 (coordinators needed)

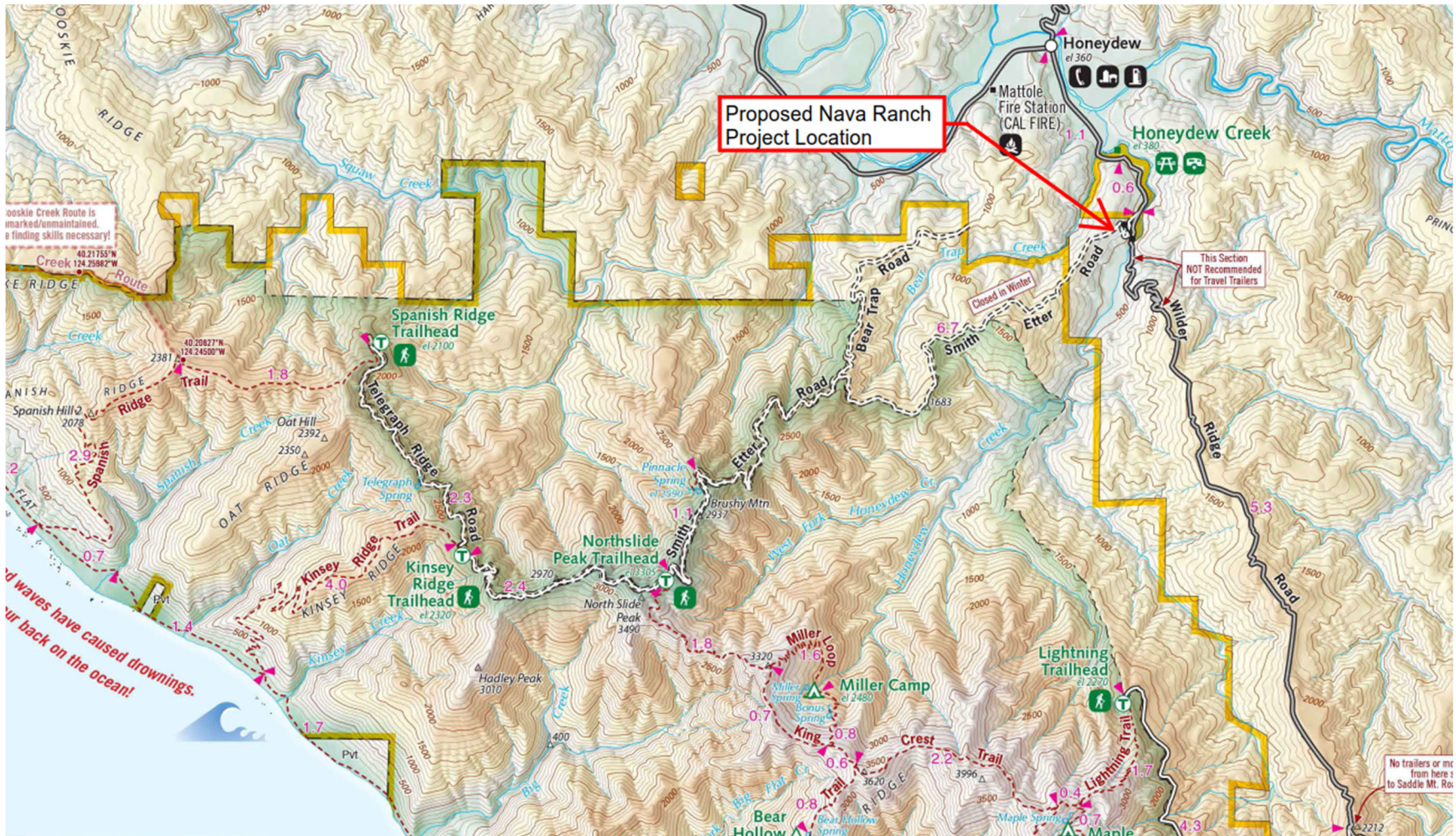
Haga, Gary & LaDonna	629-3341		
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Meaux Road E175 (coordinators needed)

Hird, Ira 599-8497 & Mariah Gregori 599-8498	@*Marshall, Peter		499-2061
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Cathryn's Road E175 (coordinators needed)

Photo of Neighborhood Emergency Services Teams (NEST); Note the applicants on Landerger Road are absent



Screenshot of BLM Map. Note that all access to Spanish Ridge, Kinsey Ridge, Northside Peak, among others, are accessed through Smith-Etter Road, which runs directly through the existing and proposed project site.