# RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

**Resolution Number: 23-111** 

Record Number: PLN-11291-CUP Assessor's Parcel Number: 522-021-009-000

Resolution by the Planning Commission of the County of Humboldt certifying compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act and conditionally approves the Emerald Mountain Coast LLC Conditional Use Permit.

WHEREAS, Emerald Mountain Coast, LLC, submitted an application and evidence in support of approving a Conditional Use Permit for 18,050 square feet (SF) of existing mixed light cannabis cultivation in greenhouses and 1,805 SF of ancillary propagation, with irrigation water sourced from a well; and

WHEREAS, the County Planning Division, the lead agency, prepared an Addendum to the Final Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) prepared for the Commercial Medical Marijuana Land Use Ordinance (CMMLUO) adopted by the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors on January 26, 2016. The proposed project does not present substantial changes that would require major revisions to the previous Mitigated Negative Declaration. No new information of substantial importance that was not known and could not be known at the time was presented as described by §15162(c) of CEQA Guidelines; and

WHEREAS, the Humboldt County Planning Commission held a duly-noticed public hearing on November 2, 2023 and reviewed, considered, and discussed the application for the Conditional Use Permit and Special Permit, and reviewed and considered all evidence and testimony presented at the hearing.

**Now, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,** that the Planning Commission makes all the following findings:

#### 1. FINDING:

A Conditional Use Permit for 18,050 square feet of existing mixed-light cannabis cultivation. The proposed project includes the restoration of a historic cultivation area. The applicant proposes nursery greenhouse of up to 1805 square feet to support on-site operations. The applicant estimates 180,500 gallons of water is required to meet annual needs. Water for irrigation is sourced from a well; rainwater catchment is proposed. Water is stored in 15 existing hard sided water tanks, with a storage capacity of 55,300 gallons. The project proposes adding a 500,000-gallon rain catchment pond. Drying and processing will occur on-site within the three proposed and existing barns. Electricity Power will be provided by a two (2) WhisperWatt 25 (Model DCA25USI4CAN), and two Honda 3000 generators on site. There will be up to 4 employees during the cultivation season and up to 12 during processing periods. The application also includes a restoration effort on a .67-acre area where tree cutting occurred. The project proposes adding two agriculturally exempt barns for drying and processing. On-site housing is proposed in the form of a permitted four-bedroom residence. There is a septic system proposed near the 2-story barn and processing building for the bedroom and processing barn. Portable toilets and handwashing stations will be provided until an ADA bathroom can be constructed.

**EVIDENCE:** a) Project File: PLN-11291-CUP

#### 2. FINDING:

CEQA. The requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act have been complied with. The Humboldt County Planning Commission has considered the adopted Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) prepared for the Commercial Medical Marijuana Land Use Ordinance (CMMLUO) adopted by the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors on January 26, 2016, and has considered the Addendum to the MND that was prepared for the Emerald Mountain Coast, LLC. project.

**EVIDENCE:** a) Addendum prepared for the proposed project.

b) The proposed project does not present substantial changes that would require major revisions to the previous MND. No new information of substantial importance that was not known and could not be known at the time was presented as described by §15162(c) of CEQA Guidelines.

- c) A Water Resources Protection Plan was prepared by Timberland Resource Consultants in 2016. The subject property contains two class three watercourses. One of the Class III watercourses is a tributary to Pine Creek. The project has been designed and conditioned such that surface water resources will not be impacted by water use for cannabis cultivation.
- d) CDFW issued a Final Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement (1600-2019-0109-R1) for the restoration of wetlands and a stream that were impacted by unpermitted cannabis cultivation. The work was completed however a slash pile was placed in the Streamside Management Area. The project has been conditioned upon removal of the slash pile.
- A Biological Assessment was prepared for the project and while there is the potential for some sensitive and protected species to be present onsite, the Biological Assessment concluded that there was a less than significant impact on threatened or endangered species. The proposed project is to continue use of existing developed sites and the potential indirect impacts are mitigated through implementation of best management practices, the SMP required by the State Water Resources Control Board, and LSAA with CDFW. There are no mapped sensitive species onsite; however, the nearest Marbled Murrelet habitat is approximately 1.7 miles to the northwest. The project is located approximately 1.3 miles to the nearest known Northern Spotted Owl (NSO) activity center. There was a positive observation of a Northern Spotted Owl .8 miles away a parcel in 1992. The proposed project is for mixed light cultivation and due to the proximity of the cultivation area to NSO habitat, a proposed condition of approval to this project would require the applicant to maintain generator and fan noise at or below 50 decibels at the edge of the clearing or 100 feet, whichever distance is closer. This will satisfy the auditory disturbance guidance prepared by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife (USFS), California Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and Department Policy Statement No. 16-005 to minimize impacts to the Northern Spotted Owl and Marbled Murrelet. The use of supplemental lighting complying with dark-sky standards can adequately address any lighting impacts on NSO and so does not recommend the prohibition of supplemental lighting during the breeding season but is recommending a condition of approval be added to this permit that would prohibit the use of artificial light until the applicant can demonstrate compliance with these noise and light standards. There is one approved outdoor and three pending (outdoor) commercial cannabis applications within 1

mile of the NSO activity center, and, because most of the applications only use artificial lighting for short durations, there is, therefore, no likelihood of cumulative impacts on this activity center from permitted commercial cannabis cultivation sites in the vicinity.

- f) A Less Than Three Acre Conversion Exemption (1-15EX-133HUM) was issued by CAL FIRE in 2015. The proposed project is entirely contained in the project is entirely contained withing the boundaries of the approved Timber Conversion areas, therefore the project will not result in a net loss of timberlands.
- g) There was Cultural Resources Investigation performed in the project's area of potential effect. The investigation, conducted by Archeological Research and Supply in March of 2019, discovered no known tribal cultural resources on the project site. The project was referred to the Northwest Information Center (NWIC) and the Hoopa Valley Tribe in 2017. The NWIC responded that their office has no record of any previous cultural resource studies for the project area but that the project area has the possibility of containing unrecorded archaeological site(s), and a study is recommended prior to commencement of project activities. Ongoing conditions of approval are incorporated regarding the Inadvertent Discoveries Protocol to protect cultural resources and tribal cultural resources.
- h) As requested by Public Works, a Road Evaluation Report was prepared for Old 3 Creeks Road from Highway 299 and concluded that the road segment is developed to the equivalent of a road category 4 standard.

# FINDINGS FOR CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT AND SPECIAL PERMIT

3. FINDING:

The proposed development is in conformance with the County General Plan, Open Space Plan, and the Open Space Action Program.

consistent with the Open Space Plan and Open Space Action

EVIDENCE: a) General agriculture is a use type permitted in the Timber Production Zone (TPZ) land use designation. The proposed cannabis cultivation, an agricultural product, is within land planned and zoned for agricultural purposes, consistent with the use of Open Space land for managed production of resources. The use of an agricultural parcel for commercial agriculture is

Program. Therefore, the project is consistent with and complimentary to the Open Space Plan and its Open Space Action Program.

## 4. FINDING:

The proposed development is consistent with the purposes of the existing TPZ-Zone in which the site is located.

#### **EVIDENCE**: a)

- a) The TPZ zone is applied to areas of the County in which timber production and recreation is the desirable predominant uses and general agriculture is the secondary uses.
- b) All general agricultural uses are principally permitted in the TPZ zone.
- c) Humboldt County Code Section 314-55.4.8.2.2 allows cultivation of up to 43,560 SF of existing outdoor cannabis and up to 22,000 SF of existing mixed light cannabis cultivation on a parcel over 5 acres subject to approval of a Conditional Use Permit and a determination that the cultivation was in existence prior to January 1, 2016. The application is for 18,050 SF of mixed-light and cultivation on a parcel 160-acres in size.

### 5. FINDING:

The proposed development is consistent with the requirements of the CMMLUO Provisions of the Zoning Ordinance.

#### **EVIDENCE**: a)

- a) The CMMLUO allows existing cannabis cultivation to be permitted in areas zoned TPZ (Section 314-55.4.8.2.2).
- b) The parcel was created in compliance with all applicable state and local subdivision regulations, a Certificate of Subdivision Compliance was issued in 2012, Document Number 2012-029475-5.
- c) Water for irrigation will be provided by a permitted well. The project is conditioned on the applicant developing enough water storage to serve at least 50% of the total annual water budget for the cultivation operation though the May15th to October 31st forbearance period.
- d) The applicant submitted a Road Evaluation Report on September 10, 2018. The report states that the entire road segment is developed to the equivalent of road category 4 standard.
- e) The cultivation of cannabis will not result in the net conversion of timberland.
- f) The location of the cultivation complies with all setbacks required in Section 314-55.4.11.d. It is more than 30 feet from any property line and more than 600 feet from any school,

church, public park or Tribal Cultural Resource.

### 6. FINDING:

The cultivation of 18,050 square feet of mixed light cannabis cultivation with ancillary propagation 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.

#### EVIDENCE: a)

- The site is located on Cloud Crossing Road, a privately maintained road. The Road Evaluation Report concluded that the entire road segment is developed to the functional equivalent of a road category 4 standard and has been found to safely accommodate the amount of traffic generated by the proposed cannabis cultivation.
- b) The site is in a rural part of the County where the typical parcel size is over 40 acres and many of the land holdings are very large. The proposed cannabis will not be in a location where there is an established neighborhood or other sensitive receptor such as a school, church, park, or other use which may be sensitive to cannabis cultivation. Approving cultivation on this site and the other sites which have been approved or are in the application process will not change the character of the area due to the large parcel sized in the area.
- c) Irrigation water will come from a groundwater well that has been permitted by the Division of Environmental Health.
- d) Provisions have been made in the applicant's proposal to protect water quality and thus runoff to adjacent property and infiltration of water to groundwater resources will not be affected.

#### 7. FINDING:

Approval of this project is consistent with Humboldt County Board of Supervisors Resolution No. 18-43 which established a limit on the number of permits and acres which may be approved in each of the County's Planning Watersheds.

## EVIDENCE: a)

The project site is in the Lower Trinity River Watershed, which under Resolution 18-43 is limited to 169 permits and 58 acres of cultivation. With the approval of this project the total approved permits in this Planning Watershed would be 59 cultivation permits and the total approved acres would be 26.22 acres of cultivation.

#### 8. FINDING:

The proposed development does not reduce the residential density for any parcel below that utilized by the Department of Housing and Community Development in determining compliance with housing element law.

**EVIDENCE:** 

a) The parcel was not included in the housing inventory of Humboldt County's 2019 Housing Element but does have the potential to support one housing unit. The approval of cannabis cultivation on this parcel will not conflict with the ability for a residence to be constructed on this parcel.

#### **DECISION**

NOW, THEREFORE, based on the above findings and evidence, the Humboldt County Planning Commission does hereby:

- Adopt the findings set forth in this resolution; and
- Conditionally approves the Conditional Use Permit for Emerald Mountain Coast LLC., based upon the Findings and Evidence and subject to the conditions of approval attached hereto as Attachment 1A and incorporated herein by reference.

Adopted after review and consideration of all the evidence on **November 2, 2023**.

The motion was made by COMMISSIONER Brian Mitchell and second by COMMISSIONER Thomas Mulder and the following ROLL CALL vote:

AYES:

COMMISSIONERS:

Iver Skavdal, Noah Levy, Lonyx Landry, Thomas

Mulder, Peggy O'Neill, Brian Mitchell, Sarah West

NOES:

**COMMISSIONERS:** 

ABSENT:

**COMMISSIONERS:** 

ABSTAIN:

**COMMISSIONERS:** 

DECISION: Motion carried 7/0

I, John Ford, Secretary to the Planning Commission of the County of Humboldt, do hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and correct record of the action taken on the above-entitled matter by said Commission at a meeting held on the date noted above.

John Ford, Director

Planning and Building Department

#### CONDTIONS OF APPROVAL

# APPROVAL OF THE SPECIAL PERMIT IS CONDITIONED ON THE FOLLOWING TERMS AND REQUIREMENTS.

- A. Conditions which must be satisfied before the provisional cannabis cultivation permit can be finalized and no longer considered provisional (unless otherwise indicated).
- 1. Within 60 days of the effective date of permit approval, the applicant shall execute a Compliance Agreement with the Humboldt County Planning and Building Department described under Conditions of Approval A7 through A11. All activities described in the agreement must be completed to the satisfaction of the Planning and Building Department before the permit may be finalized and no longer considered provisional.
- 2. Prior to cultivating in 2024, the applicant must submit and implement a restocking and restoration plan, produced by a registered professional forester, that will detail the methods used to restore approximately 0.5 acres of an existing flat and 0.17 acres of road access to the retired cultivation site with total restoration area .67 acres. This plan will also specify the method and timing for the removal of a large slash pile that was placed in a streamside management area on the parcel.
- 3. The applicant must conduct erosion control measures on the 220 linear feet, 0.17 acres, of roadway to be abandoned and the 20,000 square foot flat shown on the site plan. The .5-acre flat is to be revegetated with native vegetation as per Condition A5. Applicant must provide photographic evidence of the completed restoration prior to cultivating in 2024.
- 4. Within 60 days of the effective date of project approval the applicant shall submit a revised site plan showing the nursery greenhouse to be no more than 1,805 square feet and prior to commencing cultivation operations in 2024, the Applicant must reduce the size of the of the existing 3,000 square foot nursery foot nursery greenhouse to 1,805 square feet or less.
- 5. The applicant shall obtain 100% of power from PG&E or other renewable source by January 1, 2026, and shall be allowed one generator for emergency backup purposes only. An energy budget shall be developed which documents the electrical needs of the project and its ability to be supported by the proposed renewable energy sources.
- 6. Prior to cultivating in 2024, the applicant shall install and utilize a water meter on all irrigation sources to demonstrate that there is sufficient water supply to meet the demands of the project. The water use for cultivation is limited to the use of the irrigation infrastructure described in the Operations Plan. The applicant will maintain logs of water usage and make the logs available upon request.
- 7. The permittee shall obtain grading permits for all existing, unpermitted grading associated with the cannabis operation.

- 8. The permittee shall obtain permits or exemptions for all structures associated with the cannabis operation.
- 9. The permittee may use portable toilets to support cultivation operations until a qualified professional certifies that the septic system meets Tier 0 status for the existing onsite wastewater treatment system serving the dwelling. Onsite processing may not occur until the septic system is certified and accepted by the Division of Environmental Health. Evidence of continual use of portable toilets, e.g. receipts for rentals and service, shall be provided as part of the annual conformance review.
- 10. The applicant must limit well withdrawals for cannabis cultivation to less than 50% of the total cultivation water budget (90,250 gallons) in the May 15th to October 31st forbearance period until such time that the applicant provides a hydrologic analysis report from a licensed geologist documenting the well's disconnection from surface water.
- 11. Within two years of the effective date of the permit the applicant shall demonstrate 180,500 gallons of stored cultivation water using a combination of a permitted pond and hard sided tanks.
- 12. Within 60 days of project approval, the applicant shall execute and file with the Planning Division the statement titled, "Notice and Acknowledgment regarding Agricultural Activities in Humboldt County," ("Right to Farm" ordinance) as required by the HCC and available at the Planning and Building Department.
- 13. A Notice of Determination (NOD) will be prepared and filed with the County Clerk for this project in accordance with the State CEQA Guidelines. The Department will file the NOD and the applicant is responsible for this cost to the project.
- 14. The applicant is responsible for obtaining all necessary County and State permits and licenses, and for meeting all requirements set forth by other regulatory agencies.
- 15. The applicant shall be compliant with the County of Humboldt's Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) requirements regarding hazardous materials. A written verification of compliance shall be required before any provisional permits may be finalized. Ongoing proof of compliance with this condition shall be required at each annual inspection to keep the permit valid.
- 16. The applicant is required to pay for permit processing on a time and material basis as set forth in the schedule of fees and charges as adopted by ordinance of the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors. The Planning and Building Department will provide a bill to the applicant after the decision. All outstanding planning fees to cover the processing of the application to decision by the Hearing Officer shall be paid to the Humboldt County Planning Division, 3015 "H" Street, Eureka.
- 17. The applicant is responsible for costs for post-approval review for determining project conformance with conditions. A deposit is collected to cover this staff review. Permit conformance with conditions must be demonstrated prior to release of building permit or initiation of use and at time of annual inspection. A conformance review deposit as set forth in

the schedule of fees and charges as adopted by ordinance of the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors (currently \$750) shall be paid within sixty (60) days of the effective date of the permit or upon filing of the Compliance Agreement (where applicable), whichever occurs first. Payment shall be made to the Humboldt County Planning Division, 3015 "H" Street, Eureka.

- 18. The permittee shall take action to form or join a Road Maintenance Association (RMA) for the maintenance of the roads. In the event the applicant is unable to coordinate formation or join an RMA, the permittee shall pay fair-share cost for maintenance of the road to any road user engaged in maintaining the roads.
- 19. Prior to the issuance of a grading permit for the installation of a pond, the project will be rereferred to CDFW for specific details and requirements on bullfrog management plans.
- 20. The applicant shall provide documentation that all of the measures in the Water Resources Protection Plan prepared by Timberland Resource Consultants dated July 13, 2016 have been completed.

# B. Ongoing Requirements/Development Restrictions Which Must be Satisfied for the Life of the Project

- 1. If cultural resources are encountered during construction activities, the contractor on site shall cease all work in the immediate area and within a 50-foot buffer of the discovery location. A qualified archaeologist and the appropriate Tribal Historic Preservation Officer(s) are to be contacted to evaluate the discovery and, in consultation with the applicant and the lead agency, develop a treatment plan in any instance where significant impacts cannot be avoided. Prehistoric materials may include obsidian or chert flakes, tools, locally darkened midden soils, ground-stone artifacts, shellfish or faunal remains, and human burials. If human remains are found, California Health and Safety Code 7050.5 requires that the County Coroner be contacted immediately at 707-445-7242. If the Coroner determines the remains to be Native American, the Native American Heritage Commission will then be contacted by the Coroner to determine appropriate treatment of the remains pursuant to Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 5097.98. Violators shall be prosecuted in accordance with PRC Section 5097.99.
- 2. The combination of background, generator and greenhouse fan or other operational equipment created noise must not result in the harassment of Northern Spotted Owl species as required to meet the performance standards for noise set by Department Policy Statement No. 16-005. The combined noise levels measured at 100 feet or the edge of habitat, whichever is closer, shall be at or below 50 decibels. Conformance will be evaluated using current auditory disturbance guidance prepared by the United State Fish and Wildlife Service, and further consultation where necessary. A building permit shall be obtained should any structures be necessary for noise attenuation.
- 3. All artificial lighting shall be fully contained within structures such that no light escapes (e.g., through blackout curtains). Structures shall be shielded between 30 minutes prior to sunset and 30 minutes after sunrise to prevent disruption to crepuscular wildlife. Security lighting shall be motion activated and comply with the International Dark-Sky Association standards and

Fixture Seal of Approval Program. Standards include but are not limited to the following, 1) light shall be shielded and downward facing, 2) shall consist of low-pressure sodium (LPS) light or low spectrum light emitting diodes with a color temperature of 3000 kelvins or less and 3) only placed where needed.

- 4. Should the Humboldt County Planning Division receive complaints that lighting or noise is not complying with the standards listed above in this permit, within ten (10) working days of receiving written notification that a complaint has been filed, the applicant shall submit written verification that the light shielding and alignment, and noise levels have been repaired, inspected, and corrected as necessary.
- 5. The use of monofilament netting for all uses, including but not limited for erosion control, shall be prohibited. Geotextiles, fiber rolls, and other erosion control measure materials shall be made of loose-weave mesh, such as jute, hemp, coconut (coir) fiber, or other products without welded weaves to minimize the risk of ensnaring and strangling wildlife.
- 6. All refuse shall be contained in wildlife proof containers, always, and relocated to an authorized waste management facility, in compliance with State and local laws, on a regular and on-going basis.
- 7. Should any wildlife be encountered during work activities, the wildlife shall not be disturbed and be allowed to leave the work site unharmed.
- 8. The use of anticoagulant rodenticide is prohibited.
- 9. The Applicant shall implement a Bullfrog Management Plan as described in attachment 5A in the staff report for the project.
- 10. The operator shall provide information to all employees about the potential health impacts of cannabis use on children. Information shall be provided by posting the brochures from the Department of Health and Human Services titled "Cannabis Palm Card" and "Cannabis Rack Card." This information shall also be provided to all employees as part of the employee orientation, if applicable.
- 11. All components of the project shall be developed, operated, and maintained in conformance with the Project Description, the approved Site Plan, the Plan of Operations, the CMMLUO, and these conditions of approval.
- 12. If operating pursuant to a written approved compliance agreement, permittee shall abate or cure violations at the earliest feasible date, but in no event no more than two (2) years from the date of issuance of a provisional clearance or permit. Permittee shall provide plans for curing such violations to the Planning and Building Department within one (1) year of issuance of the provisional clearance or permit. If good faith effort toward compliance can be shown within the two years following the issuance of the provisional clearance or permit, the Department may, at the discretion of the Director, provide for extensions of the provisional permit to allow additional time to meet the outstanding requirements.

- 13. Compliance with all statutes, regulations, and requirements of the California State Water Resources Control Board and the Division of Water Rights, at a minimum to include a statement of diversion of surface water from a stream, river, underground stream, or other watercourse required by Water Code Section 5101, or other applicable permit, license, or registration, as applicable.
- 14. Confinement of the area of cannabis cultivation, processing, manufacture, or distribution to the locations depicted on the approved site plan. The commercial cannabis activity shall be set back at least 30 feet from any property line, and 600 feet from any school, school bus stop, church or other place of religious worship, or tribal cultural resources, except where a reduction to this setback has been approved pursuant to Section 55.4.11(d).
- 15. Applicant must adhere to and implement the Site Management Plan. A copy of the reporting form portion of the Mitigation and Reporting Program (MRP) shall be submitted to the Planning and Building Department upon request.
- 16. Applicant must demonstrate and maintain enrollment in Tier 1 or 2 in accordance with State Water Resources Control Board Order No. WQ 2019-0001-DWQ, or any substantially equivalent rule that may be subsequently adopted by the County of Humboldt or other responsible agency.
- 17. Comply with the terms of any applicable Lake and Stream Alteration (1600 or 1602) Permit obtained from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) if applicable.
- 18. Comply with the terms of a less-than-3-acre conversion exemption or timberland conversion permit, approved by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire), if applicable.
- 19. Consent to an annual on-site compliance inspection, with at least 24 hours prior notice, to be conducted by appropriate County officials during regular business hours (Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., excluding holidays).
- 20. Refrain from the improper storage or use of any fuels, fertilizer, pesticide, fungicide, rodenticide, or herbicide.
- 21. Pay all applicable application, review for conformance with conditions and annual inspection fees.
- 22. Fuel shall be stored and handled in compliance with applicable state and local laws and regulations, including the County of Humboldt's Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) program, and in such a way that no spillage occurs.
- 23. The master logbooks maintained by the applicant to track production and sales shall be maintained for inspection by the County.

24. Pay all applicable taxes as required by the Humboldt County Commercial Marijuana Cultivation Tax Ordinance (Humboldt County Code Section 719-1 et seq.).

## Performance Standards for Cultivation and Processing Operations

- 25. Pursuant to Business and Professions Code section 26051.5(a)(8), an applicant seeking a cultivation license shall "provide a statement declaring the applicant is an 'agricultural employer,' as defined in the Alatorre-Zenovich-Dunlap-Berman Agricultural Labor Relations Act of 1975 (Part 3.5 commencing with Section 1140) of Division 2 of the Labor Code), to the extent not prohibited by law."
- 26. Cultivators shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations governing California Agricultural Employers, which may include federal and state wage and hour laws, Cal/OSHA, OSHA, the California Agricultural Labor Relations Act, and the Humboldt County Code (including the Building Code).
- 27. Cultivators engaged in processing shall comply with the following Processing Practices:
  - a. Processing operations must be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition including all work surfaces and equipment.
  - b. Processing operations must implement protocols which prevent processing contamination and mold and mildew growth on cannabis.
  - c. Employees handling cannabis in processing operations must have access to facemasks and gloves in good operable condition as applicable to their job function.
  - d. Employees must wash hands sufficiently when handling cannabis or use gloves.
- 28. All persons hiring employees to engage in commercial cannabis cultivation and processing shall comply with the following Employee Safety Practices:
  - a. Cultivation operations and processing operations must implement safety protocols and provide all employees with adequate safety training relevant to their specific job functions, which may include:
    - (1) Emergency action response planning as necessary;
    - (2) Employee accident reporting and investigation policies;
    - (3) Fire prevention;
    - (4) Hazard communication policies, including maintenance of material safety data sheets (MSDS):
    - (5) Materials handling policies;
    - (6) Job hazard analyses; and
    - (7) Personal protective equipment policies, including respiratory protection.
  - b. Cultivation operations and processing operations must visibly post and maintain an emergency contact list which includes at a minimum:
    - (1) Operation manager contacts;
    - (2) Emergency responder contacts; and
    - (3) Poison control contacts.
  - c. At all times, employees shall have access to safe drinking water and toilets and handwashing facilities that comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws and

- regulations. Plumbing facilities and water source must be capable of handling increased usage without adverse consequences to neighboring properties or the environment.
- d. On site-housing provided to employees shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.
- 29. All cultivators shall comply with the approved processing plan as to the following:
  - a. Processing practices
  - b. Location where processing will occur
  - c. Number of employees, if any
  - d. Employee Safety Practices
  - e. Toilet and handwashing facilities
  - f. Plumbing and/or septic system and whether or not the system is capable of handling increased usage
  - g. Drinking water for employees
  - h. Plan to minimize impact from increased road use resulting from processing
  - i. On-site housing, if any
- 30. <u>Term of Commercial Cannabis Activity Permit</u>. Any Commercial Cannabis Cultivation permit issued pursuant to the CMMLUO or CCLUO shall expire one (1) year after date of issuance, and on the anniversary date of such issuance each year thereafter, unless an annual compliance inspection has been conducted and the permittees and the permitted site have been found to comply with all conditions of approval.
- 31. <u>Inspections</u>. If the inspector or other County official determines that the permittees or site do not comply with the conditions of approval, the inspector shall serve the permit holder with a written statement identifying the items not in compliance, and the action that the permit holder may take to cure the noncompliance or file an appeal within ten (10) days of the date that the written statement is delivered to the permit holder. Personal delivery or mailing the written statement to the mailing address listed on the application by regular mail, plus three (3) days after date of mailing, shall constitute delivery. The permit holder may request a reinspection to determine whether the permit holder has cured all issues of noncompliance. Failure to request reinspection or to cure any items of noncompliance shall terminate the Permit, immediately upon the expiration of any appeal period, or final determination of the appeal if an appeal has been timely filed.

The permit holder and subject property owner are to allow the County or representative(s) or designee(s) to make inspections at any reasonable time deemed necessary to assure that the activities being performed under the authority of this permit are in accordance with the terms and conditions prescribed herein.

32. <u>Permit Renewals to Comply with Updated Laws and Regulations</u>. Permit renewal is subject to the laws and regulations effective at the time of renewal, which may be substantially different than the regulations currently in place and may require the submittal of additional information to ensure that new standards are met.

- 33. Acknowledgements to Remain in Full Force and Effect. Permittee acknowledges that the County reserves the right to reduce the size of the area allowed for cultivation under any clearance or permit issued in accordance with this section in the event that environmental conditions, such as a sustained drought or low flows in the watershed in which the cultivation area is located, will not support diversions for irrigation.
- 34. <u>Transfers</u>. Transfer of any leases or permits approved by this project is subject to the review and approval of the Planning Director for conformance with CMMLUO eligibility requirements and agreement to permit terms and acknowledgments. The fee for required permit transfer review shall accompany the request. The request shall include the following information:
  - a. Identifying information for the new owner(s) and management as required in an initial permit application;
  - b. A written acknowledgment by the new owner in accordance as required for the initial permit application;
  - c. The specific date on which the transfer is to occur;
  - d. Acknowledgement of full responsibility for complying with the existing permit; and
  - e. Execution of an Affidavit of Non-diversion of Medical Cannabis.

#### **Informational Notes:**

1. The applicant shall be aware that the Federal Government considers the cultivation of cannabis to be an illegal activity. This project is accessed by using roads that pass-through lands owned by the Federal Government. The Federal Government may not allow the applicant to use these roads to transport cannabis. In such case, Humboldt County will not provide relief to the applicant. Approval of this permit does not authorize transportation of cannabis across Federal lands.



## Cultivation and Operations Manual For Emerald Mountain Coast

Cannabis Cultivation Facilities APN No. 522-021-009-000

Lead Agency:

Humboldt County Planning Department 3015 H Street Eureka, CA 95501

> Prepared By: SL Consulting Services Inc 973 Dowler Dr Eureka, California 95501

> > In Consultation with:

Emerald Mountain Coast 4235 Excelsior Road Eureka, CA 95503

> September 2023 January 2021

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## 1. Project Summary

## 1.1. Project Objective

Emerald Mountain Coast is proposing to permit Commercial Cannabis Cultivation Activities in Accordance with the County Of Humboldt Commercial Cannabis Land Use Ordinance (CCLUO). The project is seeking a Special Permit for commercial cannabis cultivation of 18,050 square feet Mixed Light cultivation with 3,000 square feet of appurtenant nursery facility. The project proposes moving existing cultivation to sites on-property that are better suited (see Site Plan). Drying/curing activities to take place in an existing 30'x46' ag exempt shop building. Processing to occur off-site in a licensed facility. Cultivation will occur in greenhouses in raised beds using amended soil. Project will add four (4) proposed buildings, the two (2) 30'x50' buildings for processing and two (2) proposed detached sleeping units. Water will be provided by an onsite existing permitted well. There is 45,000 gallons of existing hard plastic tank storage, the project proposes adding rain catchment off the barns, additional tank storage and a 500,000 gallon pond to support cultivation. Water will be used to apply beneficial bacteria (compost tea, beneficial bacteria) and for foliar organic pesticide application. Nursery structures will be cold frame structures with supplemental lighting. Blackout tarps will be pulled over the greenhouses. Power will be provided by a WhisperWatt 25 (Model DCA25USI4CAN), four (4) Honda 3000 and two (2) Honda 6000 generators on site. EMC will limit the use of the generator to an as needed basis following all guidelines set up by Humboldt County and the State of California.

#### 2. Land Use

## 2.1. Site Description

The Project is located near Willow Creek, CA (APN 522-021-009-000) just east of the intersection of Stover and Bair Roads. The subject parcel is zoned TPZ and is approximately 167.46 total acres in size (per the County of Humboldt's WebGIS). The property is primarily forested, with some developed flats. Cultivation areas are buffered by forest.

## 2.2. State of California Commercial Cannabis Activity License

Emerald Mountain Coast will operate under a California Cultivation license.

#### 2.3. State Water Resources Control Board

Water will be provided by an existing permitted well and a total of 45,000 gallons of hard plastic tank storage in various sized tanks up to a max size of 5000 gallons. The project proposes adding rain catchment off the barns, additional plastic tank storage and a 500,000 gallon pond to support cultivation. The property will be enrolled under the Waterboard's Cannabis Cultivation general order.

## 2.4. Cal Fire

The subject property is located within a State Responsibility Area (SRA) for fire protection and SRA requirements have been met. All structures on the property meet the 30-foot SRA setback requirement

from property lines.

## 2.5. California Department of Fish and Wildlife

A Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement (LSAA) from the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) has been secured for the subject parcel.

#### 2.6. Cultural Resources

If buried archaeological or historical resources are encountered during construction or cultivation activities, the applicant or contractor shall call all work in the immediate area to halt temporarily, and a qualified archaeologist is to be contacted to evaluate the materials. Prehistoric materials may include obsidian or chart flakes, tools, locally darkened midden soils, ground stone artifacts, dietary bone, and human burials. If human burial is found during construction, state law requires that the County Coroner be contacted immediately. If the remains are found to be those of a Native American, the California Native American Heritage Commission will then be contacted by the Coroner to determine appropriate treatment of the remains. The applicant is ultimately responsible for ensuring compliance with this condition.

## 3. Cultivation and Processing

## 3.1. Propagation and Initial Transplant

Operator starts plants taken from cuttings from "mother" plants maintained in the nursery greenhouse. Cuttings are taken from mother plants and placed into trays to root under low intensity lights.

Once the cuttings are rooted, they are transplanted into 4" pots within the nursery spaces to reach the appropriate size to plant. String lights will be used with blackout covers for light control to maintain vegetative stage. Once the risk of frost has passed, juvenile plants are then transplanted to the cultivation greenhouses.

#### 3.2. Outdoor Cultivation Plan and Schedule

The cultivation will occur within the cultivation greenhouses as outlined in the site plan.

See schedule of operations below.

Proposed Cultivation Schedule

Cultivation Operations Schedule		
Month	Cultivation Activities	Processing Activities
January	Maintenance	No activity
February	Maintenance	No activity
March	Raising nursery stock	No activity
April	Plant beds	No activity
May	Maintain plants	No activity
June	Maintain plants	No activity
July	Watering/maintain plants/1st harvest/replant	Bucking down plants, drying
August	Watering/maintain plants/leaf and prune	Bucking down plants, drying
September	Watering/maintain plants/begin harvest	Bucking down plants, drying
October	Harvest	Bucking down plants, drying
November	Maintenance/Cover crop	No activity
December	Maintenance/Cover crop	No activity

# 3.3. Irrigation Plan and Schedule

Irrigation and fertigation of plants occurs using drip irrigation and hand watering methods at agronomic rates which conserves water by not allowing excess water runoff.

Water is used for supplemental foliar spraying of pesticides and drip watering of inoculants such as, compost tea and beneficial bacteria.

See section 5.1 for water usage estimates.

# 3.4. Harvesting, Drying, and Trimming

Plants that are ready for harvest have their flowering branches removed and are brought to the drying facility. Once taken to the drying building then hung and suspended in the drying facilities. The drying facilities are equipped with air conditioning and dehumidifiers to ensure proper curing and elimination of conditions for mold. All work surfaces are maintained in a clean and sanitary manner. Contamination prevention protocols are strictly followed within the facilities.

Dried buds are bucked off the stalks and put into totes for transport to an off-site trimming facility. Waste plant stalk/stem material is composted onsite just outside the cultivation area.

## 3.5. Processing Facility

Drying will occur at the existing 30'x46' ag exempt shop. No trimming will occur on-site.

## 3.6. Employee Plan

Emerald Mountain Coast is an "agricultural employer" as defined in the Alatorre-Zenovich-Dunlap-Berman Agricultural Labor Relations Act of 1975 (Part 3.5 (commencing with Section 1140) of Division 2 of the Labor Code), and complies with all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations governing California Agricultural Employers.

- Job Descriptions And Employee Summary
- Agent in Charge: Responsible for business oversight and management of the Emerald Mountain Coast. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to: inventory and tracking, personnel management, record keeping, budget, and liaison with State and County inspectors as needed. This is a part-time to full-time, seasonal position.
- > Operations and Compliance Managers: Oversight and management of the day to day cultivation of medical cannabis. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to: plant propagation and transplant, soil management, irrigation, fertilization, pesticide management, and harvest activities. This is a full-time, year-round position.
- > Seasonal Laborer: Provides cultivation, harvesting and processing support. This is a part-time to full-time, seasonal position.

# 3.7. Staffing Requirements

In addition to the Agent in Charge and full time Operations Manager, EMC intends to employ one (1) full time Assistant Cultivator, one (1) Seasonal Processing Manager and up to four (4) seasonal labor positions for an estimated total of approximately eight (8) employees maximum at the Project site at any given time.

Month	Cultivation	Harvest/ Processing
January	-	0
February	-	0
March	3	0
April	3	4
May	3	4

June	3	0
July	4	4
August	4	4
September	4	<mark>0</mark>
October	4	4
November	3	<mark>0</mark>
December	3	0

## 3.8. Employee Training and Safety

On site cultivation, harvesting, drying and processing is performed by employees trained on each aspect of the procedure including: cultivation and harvesting techniques and use of pruning tools; proper application and storage of pesticides and fertilizers. All cultivation and processing staff are provided with proper hand, eye, body and respiratory Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Access to the onsite facilities are limited to authorized and trained staff.

All employees are trained on proper safety procedures including fire safety; use of rubber gloves and respirators; proper hand washing guidelines; and protocol in the event of an emergency. Contact information for the local fire department, CAL FIRE, Humboldt County Sheriff and Poison Control as well as the Agent in Charge will be posted at the employee restroom. Each employee is provided with a written copy of emergency procedures and contact information. The material safety data sheets (MSDS) are kept on site and accessible to employees.

# 3.9. Toilet and Handwashing Facilities

Portable toilets and handwashing stations will be provided until an ADA bathroom can be constructed.

# 3.10. Drinking Water Source

Bottled water will be provided and empty bottles will be properly disposed of.

# 3.11. On Site Housing

On-site housing is proposed in the form of three (3) detached 10'x12' sleeping areas for employees as indicated on the site plan. Housing is provided for all full-time on-site cultivation employees.

# 3.12. On Site Parking

See plot plan for parking locations.

# 4. Security Plan and Hours of Operation

## 4.1. Facility Security

Entry gates are located at entrances. The entry gates remain locked at all times and access to the cultivation area is limited exclusively to employees. Motion sensors located at access points and any buildings holding drying or processed inventory. The drying facility area has low intensity, downcast and shielded exterior lighting to illuminate the entrances, and will include a small number of motion activated security lights. All lighting will be designed and located so that direct rays are confined to the property. Security cameras and alarm system is installed at entrances to the site.

## 4.2. Hours of Operation

Activities associated with cultivation in the greenhouses (watering, transplanting, and harvesting) generally occur during daylight hours. All other activities typically occur no earlier than 8 AM and extend no later than 8 PM.

### 5. Environment

## 5.1. Water Source and Projected Water Use

Water is provided by an existing permitted well onsite.

Emerald Mountain Coast utilizes water management strategies such as drip irrigation to conserve water use.

The table below outlines the estimated irrigation water usage for cultivation during a typical year. Variables such as weather conditions and specific cannabis strains will have a slight effect on water use. The majority of the water used for the plants occurs in July and August. A total of 180,500 gallons of water usage is estimated (10 gallons per square foot canopy).

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JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	ОСТ	NOV	DEC
m( not 0.0)		5,000	22,200	22,200	22,200	33,300	33,300	23,700	23,700		~~

## 5.2. Water Storage

There is 51,400 gallons of existing hard plastic tank storage:

- (3) 1,300 gallon
- (1) 3,500 gallon
- (3) 2,500 gallon
- (1) 1,500 gallon
- (7) 5,000 gallon

The project proposes adding rain catchment off the barns, additional tank storage and a 500,000 gallon rain catchment pond to support the cultivation operation and for use as an emergency fire suppression water source. The well will be used to supplement rainwater catchment.

# 5.3. Site Drainage, Runoff, and Erosion Control

Emerald Mountain Coast will enroll with the State Water Quality Control Board State general order and a Water Resource Protection Plan (WRPP) will be developed utilizing best management practices (BMP's) in accordance with the NCRWQCB's recommendations.

# 5.4. Site Drainage and Runoff

The site has a forested buffer surrounding the property to mitigate runoff.

Buffers and setbacks from neighboring drainages are met. Cultivation occurs on existing log landings that are less than 15% in slope.

### 5.5. Erosion Control

Emerald Mountain Coast will utilize best management practices including but not limited to:

- Maintenance of roads, including rocking and armoring.
- Proper management of solid, liquid and cultivation waste (see section 3.8)
- Cultivation facilities and spoil stockpiles will meet all required setbacks from riparian and wetland areas.
- Irrigation and application of fertilizers will be applied at agronomic rates.
- Regulated products will be safely stored with secondary containment (see section 3.7)

#### 5.6. Watershed and Habitat Protection

Adherence to the proposed best management practices ensures that the watershed and surrounding habitat are protected. The cultivation activities and associated structures meet all required setbacks from the nearest watercourse, providing a suitable buffer between the cultivation operation and habitat. Additionally, site development and maintenance activities utilize BMP's in accordance with the NCRWQCB's recommendations. Any grading and earthwork activities will be conducted by a licensed contractor in accordance with approved grading permits.

## 5.7. Monitoring and Reporting

Monitoring will be conducted to confirm the effectiveness of corrected measures listed in the Water Resource Protection Plan and determine if the site meets all Standard Conditions. Inspections will include photographic documentation of any controllable sediment discharge sites as identified on the site map. Visual inspection will occur at those locations on the site where pollutants or wastes, if uncontained, could be transported into receiving waters, and those locations where runoff from roads or developed areas drains into or towards surface water. The inspection will also document the progress of any plan element subject to a time schedule, or in the process of being implemented.

- ▶ Before and after any significant alteration or upgrade to a given stream crossing, road segment, or other controllable sediment discharge site. Inspection should include photographic documentation, with photo records to be kept on site.
- > Prior to October 15 and December 15 to evaluate site preparedness for storm events and storm water runoff.
- Following any rainfall event with an intensity of 3 inches precipitation in 24 hours. Precipitation data can be obtained from the National Weather Service by entering the site zip code at http://www.srh.noaa.gov/forecast.

A Monitoring and Reporting Form will be submitted upon initial enrollment in the Order and then annually by March 1 to the Water Board. The annual report will include data from the monitoring reports.

## 5.8. Energy Plan

Due to the remote location and off the grid nature of the site, it will be necessary for Emerald Mountain Coast to use generators for power. EMC will limit the use of the generators to an as needed basis following all guidelines set up by Humboldt County and the State of California. The generators will be in operation from March to November for supplemental lighting within the mixed light greenhouses and non-commercial nursery and drying and for the processing facilities..

Generators used onsite:

	Two	WhisperWatt	25
700	1 110	11 IIIDDAT 11 mm	<i></i>

Two (2) Honda 3000 generators

At 23 feet the WhisperWatt generates 65 decibels and will be placed in an enclosure to ensure noise generation remains below 50 decibels at 100'. The Honda generators have a peak of 57 decibels in operation and will generate less than 50 decibels of noise at 100' at load.

See Section 5.11 for details on the storage of generator fuel.

## 5.9. Light Pollution Control Plan

Mixed light greenhouses use blackout tarp over the lighted canopy areas whenever supplemental lighting is utilized outside of daylight hours. The project will meet International Dark Sky Standards.

# 5.10. Best Management Practices

Best Management Practices (BMP's) are employed when storing, handling, mixing, application and disposal of all fertilizers, pesticides and fungicides. All nutrients, pesticides and fungicides are located in a locked storage room, and contained within water tight, locked and labeled containers in accordance with manufacturer's instruction. Application rates will be tracked and reported with the end of the year monitoring report required in the SMP. Employees responsible for application are trained to handle, mix, apply or dispose of pesticides/fungicides with proper hand, eye body and respiratory protection in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.

## 5.11. Fertilizers

Nutrients and biological inoculants used for cultivation and kept on site	includ	de
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- $\Box$  Age Old Bloom and Age Old Grow ( $\pm 30$  gallons),
- $\Box$  Sea Pal ( $\pm 10$  gallons),
- ☐ Maxsea All Purpose/Bloom (±9 gallons),
- ☐ Earth Juice Sea Blast (40 lb bag)
- ☐ Liquid bone meal (12 gallons)
- Green sand (50 lb bag),
- Oyster shell (50 lb bag)

	Rock phosphorous (50 lb bag)
	Chicken manure (50 lb bag)
	Potash (50 lb bag)
	Feather meal (50 lb bag)
	Sea kelp (50 lb bag)
	Azomite (50 lb bag),
	Nutri Rich fertilizer pellets (50 lb bag)
Pestici	ides and fungicides used for cultivation include:
	Neem oil (1 gallon)
	Azamax (1 gallon)
	Doctor Zyme's eliminator (3 gallons)
	Beuvera bassiana (beneficial fungus)
	QST Subtilis (beneficial bacteria)
Fuels,	oils other regulated substances stored on site include:
	Gasoline 150 gallons
	Diesel 300 gallons
	Motor Oil, up to 10 gallons
	Coolant, up to 5 gallons
	Isopropyl/Ethyl Alcohol/Bleach – up to 5 Gallons
Fuel is	s stored in an existing 10x12 storage shed with a concrete floor with secondary containment.

# 5.12. Waste Management Plan

Animal-proof trash and recycling containers are located near the commercial buildings. Solid waste and recycling is hauled off-site to a transfer station at least once per month.

# 5.13. Cultivation Waste and Soil Management

Cultivation vegetative matter such as root balls are composted on site. Soil is generally reused and stored in the greenhouse beds and reused. If soil must be disposed of, it is self-hauled to at a licensed transfer facility or landscaping yard for re-amendment and re-sale.

# 5.14. Materials Management Plan

Waste bins with lids are kept adjacent to cultivation sites and emptied out the day they are filled up or weekly.

Waste materials are stored in a trailer and self-hauled off weekly to a licensed waste transfer station.

## 5.15. Wastewater Management

Combination of hand watering and drip irrigation methods minimize the over-irrigation of plants and subsequent runoff. Moreover, the greenhouse floors are gravel/dirt and will absorb any excess runoff.

## 5.16. Storm-water Management Plan

Roads will be armored appropriately.

Rainwater from the roofs will be captured and stored in plastic tanks reducing runoff

Native soil will be utilized and cover cropped to reduce sediment delivery.

## 5.17. Relocation Environmental Superiority Narrative

The project proposes relocation of cannabis cultivation to an environmentally superior location. The relocation will allow restoration of approximately 0.5 acres of an existing flat and reduction of 0.17 on-site road.

The relocation also increases the setback of the cultivation area from approximately 380' from the eastern property line abutting national forest land to approximately 870'. The relocation will increase the cultivation area setback from an adjoining drainage from 330' to over 660'.

# 6. Product Management

# 6.1. Product Testing and Labeling

Sampling and labeling is handled by the third party distributor off-site.

# 6.2. Product Inventory and Tracking

Site will be enrolled with the state METRC track and trace system and utilizes it to manage inventory and tracking.

# 6.3. Transportation and Distribution

Transportation will be handled by a third-party, contracted, licensed transporter/distributor in accordance with State and Local regulations. All merchantable product will be distributed through licensed medical cannabis dispensaries. Prior to moving packages from the on-site holding facility to another physical location, a transport manifest will be created by the distributor/transporter and will include:

- > Product ID numbers and product weight
- > Route to be travelled

- > Origin and destination address
- > Time of departure
- > Time of arrival

The Agent in Charge and the Cultivation Manager are responsible for performing a physical inventory of all packages being transported, and ensuring that the physical inventory coincides with the transport manifest.

