

Santos, Steven A

From: Kamoroff, Corrina@Wildlife <Corrina.Kamoroff@Wildlife.ca.gov>
Sent: Thursday, November 02, 2023 9:33 AM
To: Santos, Steven A
Cc: Manthorne, David@Wildlife; Johnson, Cliff
Subject: App: PLN-11852, PLN: 221-171-002

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Good Morning,

Please see the comments below regarding the subject project.

Project Number: PLN-11852-CUP

Project Name: Joshua Gatlin - Existing cultivation of 29,070 SF ML + OD

APN(s): 221-171-022

CEQA: CEQA-2022-0213-0000-R1

Project Description

The applicant is seeking a Conditional Use Permit for 29,070 square feet of existing commercial cannabis cultivation of which 16,170 square feet is mixed light cultivation, 8,250 square feet of outdoor cultivation utilizing light deprivation techniques, and 4,650 square feet is full-sun outdoor cultivation. The project is supported by a 114 square-foot propagation greenhouse. Water for irrigation is sourced from two permitted wells. The projected annual water usage is 295,800 gallons (10.0 gal/SF) and existing water storage totals 242,500 gallons in 14 water bladders and 29 hard sided tanks. Drying and curing occurs onsite. Trimming and packaging occurs offsite at a licensed third party processing facility. Between 4 and 8 seasonal employees may be utilized. Energy for the operation is sourced from P.G.E., and (12) 245-watt solar panels are used to power fans in the greenhouses.

CDFW COMMENTS:

Thank you for referring this application to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for review and comment.

On October 30, 2023, CDFW staff conducted a site inspection at the subject property on Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 221-171-022. During the site visit staff walked the property to observe current and historic cultivation activities. The following comments are intended to assist the Lead Agency in making informed decisions in the planning process. The following comments shall supersede prior comments submitted by CDFW regarding PLN-11852-CUP. CDFW requests that all comments are incorporated in the final Humboldt County Staff Report.

- On December 14, 2018, CDFW issued a final Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement (LSAA No. 1600-2018-0271-R1) for three projects to upgrade failing and undersized stream crossings on APN: 221-171-022.

- The LSAA will expire on December 14, 2023, and had a required work completion date of no later than October 1, 2020. As of November 1, 2023, no work has been initiated or completed, and as a result the applicant is out of compliance with the LSAA. Additionally, while onsite, CDFW observed two failing culverts that are not notified for in the current LSAA that will need to be upgraded and maintained. CDFW requests, as a condition of project approval, that the applicant extends and amends their LSAA prior to the expiration date, and complete all required work within two years or less, to achieve compliance with the LSAA. Alternatively, If the applicant does not extend their LSAA they will no longer have a valid agreement and will be required to renotify for an LSAA with CDFW.
- While onsite, CDFW observed that the five failing stream crossings have the potential to discharge sediment to Waters of the State. CDFW requests, as a condition of project approval, that the applicant submits and implements an interim erosion control plan no later than November 30, 2023, to mitigate the existing threats of sediment delivery from the five stream crossings until further remedial action can be pursued in the 2024 work season.
- While onsite, CDFW observed monofilament netting (trellis) used for cannabis cultivation. To minimize the risk of wildlife entrapment, CDFW requests, as a condition of project approval, the prohibition of synthetic netting (e.g., plastic or nylon) including photo or biodegradable plastic netting for the purpose of cultivation operations and/or erosion control.
- The applicant is proposing to have 242,500 gallons of water storage in 14 water bladders and 29 hard sided tanks. The water bladders onsite vary in size from 1,000 gallons to 20,000 gallons and hold ~174,000 gallons of water. If the water bladders fail, a substantial amount of water will be lost in a short amount of time and water released from the bladders have the potential to cause substantial erosion below the bladder location. CDFW requests, as a condition of project approval, that the applicant replace the water bladders with an approved method of water storage.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project.

Corrina Kamoroff

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