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County of Sonoma
Permit & Resource Management Department

Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration

Publication Date:	March 10, 2021
Public Review Period:	3/10/21 to 4/9/21
State Clearinghouse Number:	
Permit Sonoma File Number:	**UPC17-0041**
Prepared by:	Marina Herrera
Phone:	(707) 565-2397

Pursuant to Section 15071 of the State CEQA Guidelines, this proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration and the attached Initial Study, including the identified mitigation measures and monitoring program, constitute the environmental review conducted by the County of Sonoma as lead agency for the proposed project described below:

Project Name:	**UPC17-0041; Indoor & Mixed-light Cannabis Cultivation**
Project Applicant/Operator:	Lisa Lai, All Cali Farms, LLC.
Project Location/Address:	2000 Los Alamos Road
APN:	030-050-009
General Plan Land Use Designation:	Resources and Rural Development
Zoning Designation:	Resources and Rural Development (RRD), one dwelling unit per 200 acres (B6 200)
Decision Making Body:	Sonoma County Board of Supervisors
Appeal Body:	N/A
Project Description:	**See Item III, below**

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" or "Less than Significant with Mitigation" as indicated in the attached Initial Study and in the summary table below.

Table 1. Summary of Topic Areas

Topic Area	Abbreviation	Yes	No
Aesthetics	VIS		No
Agricultural & Forest Resources	AG		No
Air Quality	AIR	Yes	
Biological Resources	BIO	Yes	
Cultural Resources	CUL		No
Energy	ENE		No
Geology and Soils	GEO		No
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	GHG		No
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	HAZ		No
Hydrology and Water Quality	HYDRO		No
Land Use and Planning	LU		No
Mineral Resources	MIN		No
Noise	NOISE	Yes	
Population and Housing	POP		No
Public Services	PS		No
Recreation	REC		No
Transportation	TRANS		No
Tribal Cultural Resources	TCR		No
Utility and Service Systems	UTL		No
Wildfire	WILD		No
Mandatory Findings of Significance			No

RESPONSIBLE AND TRUSTEE AGENCIES

The following lists other public agencies whose approval is required for the project, or who have jurisdiction over resources potentially affected by the project.

Table 2. Agencies and Permits Required

Agency	Activity	Authorization
California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA)	Issuance of State Cannabis license	Medicinal and Adult-Use Cannabis Regulation and Safety Act

Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD)	Stationary air emissions	BAAQMD Rules and Regulations (Regulation 2, Rule 1 – General Requirements; Regulation 2, Rule 2 – New Source Review; Regulation 9 – Rule 8 – NOx and CO from Stationary Internal Combustion Engines; and other BAAQMD administered Statewide Air Toxics Control Measures (ATCM) for stationary diesel engines
State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB)	Cannabis cultivation wastewater discharge	Order No. WQ 2019-0001-DWQ – Cannabis Cultivation General Order

ENVIRONMENTAL FINDING:

Based on the evaluation in the attached Initial Study, I find that the project described above could not have a significant effect on the environment, and a Mitigated Negative Declaration is proposed.

Based on the evaluation in the attached Initial Study, I find that the project described above will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment, provided that the mitigation measures identified in the Initial Study are included as conditions of approval for the project and a Mitigated Negative Declaration is proposed. The applicant has agreed in writing to incorporate identified mitigation measure into the project plans.

_____

Prepared by: Marina Herrera Date: 3/10/2021

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County of Sonoma
Permit & Resource Management Department

Expanded Initial Study

I. INTRODUCTION

All Cali Farms, LLC. proposes a commercial cannabis cultivation operation including indoor and mixed light greenhouse cultivation and on-site processing on a partially developed rural parcel. One previously existing building (prior to 2020 Glass Fire) will be rebuilt in like-kind and utilized in the operation and two new structures will be constructed. A referral letter was sent to the appropriate local, state and interest groups who may wish to comment on the project.

This report is an Initial Study required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The report was prepared by Marina Herrera, Project Review Planner with Permit Sonoma. Information on the project was provided by All Cali Farms, LLC and their consultants. Technical studies provided by qualified consultants are attached to this Expanded Initial Study to support the conclusions. Other reports, documents, maps and studies referred to in this document are available for review at the Permit and Resource Management Department (Permit Sonoma).

Please contact Marina Herrera, at (707) 565-2397 for more information.

II. EXISTING FACILITY

The project site is located at 2000 Los Alamos Road, within the northeastern unincorporated area of Sonoma County, approximately 3 miles east of incorporated Santa Rosa (Figure 1, Project Vicinity). The 15-acre site was previously developed with an agricultural barn, prior to the September 2020, Glass Fire. Prior to September 2020, the agricultural barn was utilized for cannabis cultivation. Additionally, the project site had been previously developed with vineyards, which have since died. The project would be served by two onsite wells, and a new onsite septic system is proposed.

Access to the project site is from Los Alamos Road down a private gravel road- McCormick Road. The project site is composed of woodland and grassland vegetation communities. The project site borders Hood Mountain Regional Park along a portion of the southern property line and Sugarloaf Ridge State Park to the east.

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Lisa Lai (All Cali Farms, LLC.) proposes to establish a commercial cannabis cultivation operation including two indoor cultivation buildings and one mixed-light cultivation structure (greenhouse). Processing would also occur within the indoor cultivation facilities. Processing activities are limited to the drying, curing, and storage of cannabis.

Proposed Operation:
The project proposal includes 3,799 square feet of indoor cannabis cultivation (Type 1A state license) and 2,850 square feet of mixed light cannabis cultivation (Type 1B state license) with an additional 784 square feet devoted to processing of cannabis grown on site including drying, trimming, curing, grading, and associated storage. The project proposes the construction of two new structures: a new 2-story, 2236 square foot cultivation building and 2,850 square foot greenhouse. The operation would occupy a total area of approximately 7,000 square feet, or approximately 0.16-acres, on a 15-acre property zoned RRD

(Resources and Rural Development).

The operation would utilize two year-round employees and four seasonal employees. Seasonal employees would work three days at a time every three months. Adequate parking for employees, including one ADA accessible space, would be provided south of the cannabis cultivation buildings. The proposal includes typical operational hours of 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM daily and specifies that site would be closed to the public and not contain any retail components.

Prior to the 2020 Glass Fire, the applicant was cultivating 539 square feet of indoor cannabis with processing in an agricultural barn under the Sonoma County Cannabis Penalty Relief Program.

Previously Existing Indoor/Processing Building:
A 2,600 square foot, two-story agricultural barn intended for project operations existed on the project site, prior to the 2020 Glass Fire. This structure will be rebuilt in like-kind through Permit Sonoma's Resiliency Permit Center. The to be built agricultural structure will support 1,563 square feet of indoor cannabis, 784 square feet of cannabis processing activities and an ADA compliant restroom.

Proposed New Two-Story Cultivation Building:
The applicant/operator proposes to build a new 2,400 square foot, two-story structure for solely indoor cultivation of cannabis. Within this structure, the applicant would house a 2,236 square foot canopy.

Proposed New Greenhouse:
The applicant/operator proposes to build a new 2,850 square foot greenhouse, that would support a 2,850 square foot canopy of mixed-light cannabis. This facility would be outfitted with electrical provisions, louvered exhaust vents for air circulation, and overhead lamps approximately every 6 feet. The proposed greenhouse would have four rows of plants, 95 feet in length and three aisles for employees to work.

Private Road, Access, and Parking:
The existing private McCormick road entrance from Los Alamos Road would be widened to 24 feet. A fire truck turnaround, supported by a new retaining wall, would be constructed to the south of the existing and proposed cultivation structures. The private access road off of Los Alamos Road – McCormick Road, provides for two turn outs. The improvements would widen and improve the angle for access to the road and would be done concurrently with grading for the new structures. Four parking spaces would provided at the cultivation site, including one ADA compliant space. In addition, Applicant will continue to coordinate with neighbors to secure easement rights to an existing Pacific Gas and Electric maintenance road that could serve as a secondary fire emergency egress route.

Utilities (Water Supply, Septic, and Electricity):
The applicant/operator proposes to use two existing wells on the property, which are located within 250 feet of the existing indoor cannabis cultivation site, to the west. Water drawn from the two wells would be pumped into two 5,000 gallon holding tanks which are located approximately 50 feet west of the existing indoor cultivation site. The project would be served by an existing septic system. A restroom facility meeting ADA requirements will be constructed in the re-built agricultural structure. The applicant/operator proposes to source 100% renewable energy through the combination of purchasing offset credits from Sonoma Clean Power and installation of solar panels.

Solid Waste:
The project will generate streams of solid waste that will be treated differently. Human solid waste (garbage) and other waste that cannot be recycled or composted will be stored for no longer than one week in containers. Garbage and refuse on this site shall accumulate or be stored for no more than seven calendar days, and shall be properly disposed of at a County Transfer Station or County Landfill before the end of the seventh day. No visually recognizable Cannabis, nor materials that smell like Cannabis shall be disposed of as ordinary refuse. All Cannabis waste shall be ground, chipped or shredded as necessary and mixed with suitable materials and composted until it is no longer recognizable as Cannabis by sight or smell. Cannabis and non-cannabis related green waste will be mulched on site for and composted in a dedicated area immediately west of the cultivation structures.

Wastewater:
Cultivation related wastewater is expected to minimal as cultivation is controlled indoor and in a closed mixed-light facility. Any cultivation wastewater would be collected and hauled off site for regulated disposal at an East Bay Municipal Water District discharge site. Wastewater from hand washing or toilet flushing would be disposed of in a new proposed septic system.

Site Characteristics:
The project is located on a 15-acre triangularly shaped parcel east of incorporated Santa Rosa. The closest public road is Los Alamos Road, which runs East/West and adjacent to the Northeast boundary of the subject property. Site access is provided by a private road (informally referenced as McCormick Road) with easements through adjacent parcels 030-090-005 and 030-060-0004. Prior to the 2020 Glass Fire the nearest residential structure was located on a neighboring parcel over 500 feet to the east of the project area. The next nearest residence is located over 3,700 feet from the project area to the northeast. The project would be setback 100 feet from the nearest property line to the north and over 790 feet from the southern property line shared with Hood Mountain Regional Park to the southeast an Open Space Preserve.

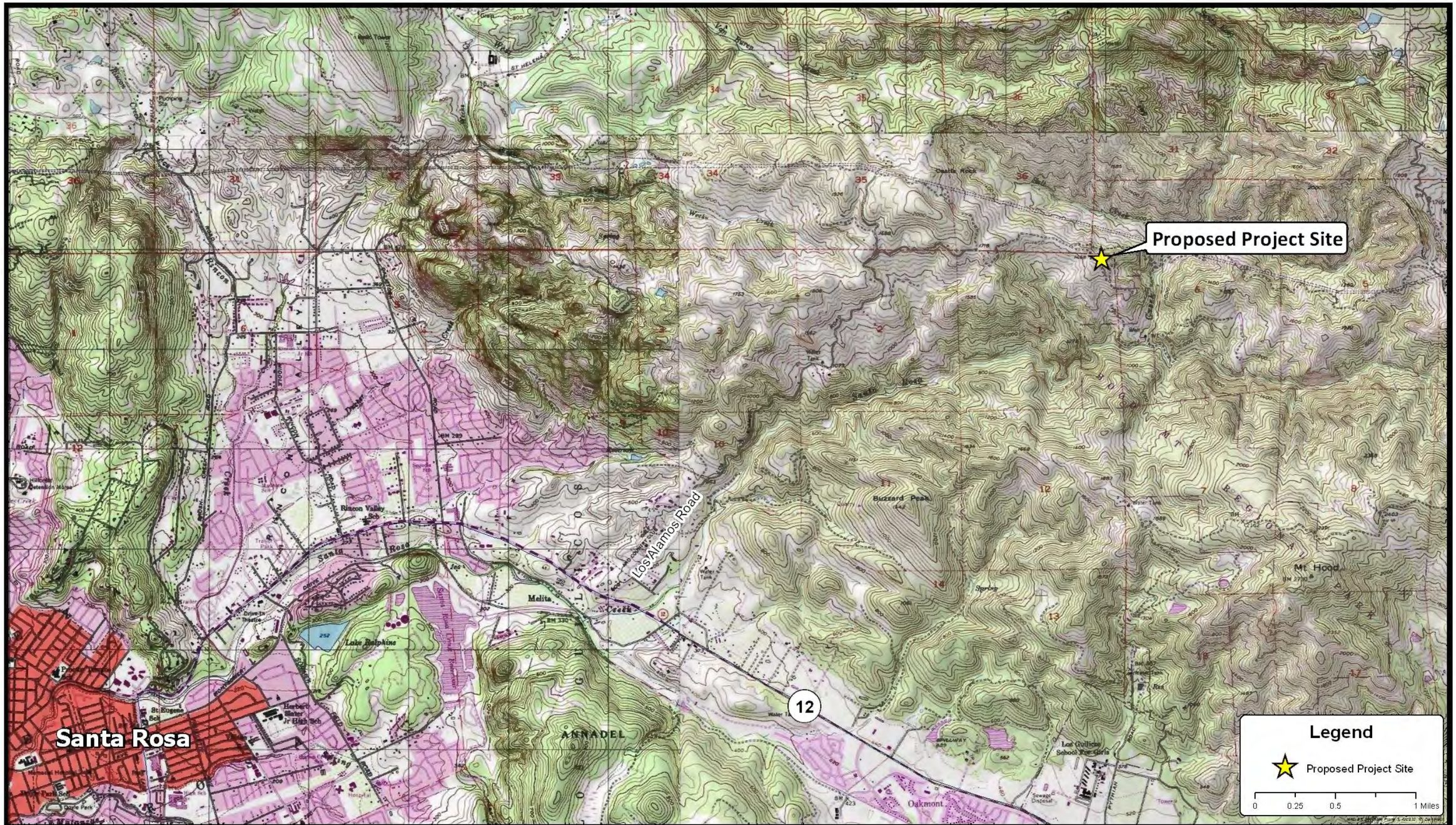
Topography:
The subject property slopes severely from west to east but the project area is otherwise level. The western edge of the property is a hillcrest that runs through the property north to south. Cultivation structures are sited on slopes less than 10%.

Vegetation:
The site contains a combination of annual grassland, montane hardwood forest, and ruderal/disturbed vegetation. The western ridgeline of the property is comprised mostly of annual grassland and ruderal vegetation while the eastern sloping hillside of property is comprised of montane hardwood vegetative community including pronounced hardwood and conifer tree canopies and herbaceous ground plant species.

IV. SETTING

Existing land uses on neighboring properties include grazing land, vineyards, residences, and Hood Mountain Regional Park and Open Space Preserve. The majority of the surrounding environment is undeveloped ranchland. To the southeast, the subject property borders Hood Mountain Regional Park an Open Space Preserve. The subject property is zoned Resources and Rural Development, one dwelling unit for each 200 acres. Land use designations for adjacent parcels are all zoned Resources and Rural Development, portions of Hood Mountain Regional Park is zoned Public Facilities District.

Figure 1. Vicinity Map



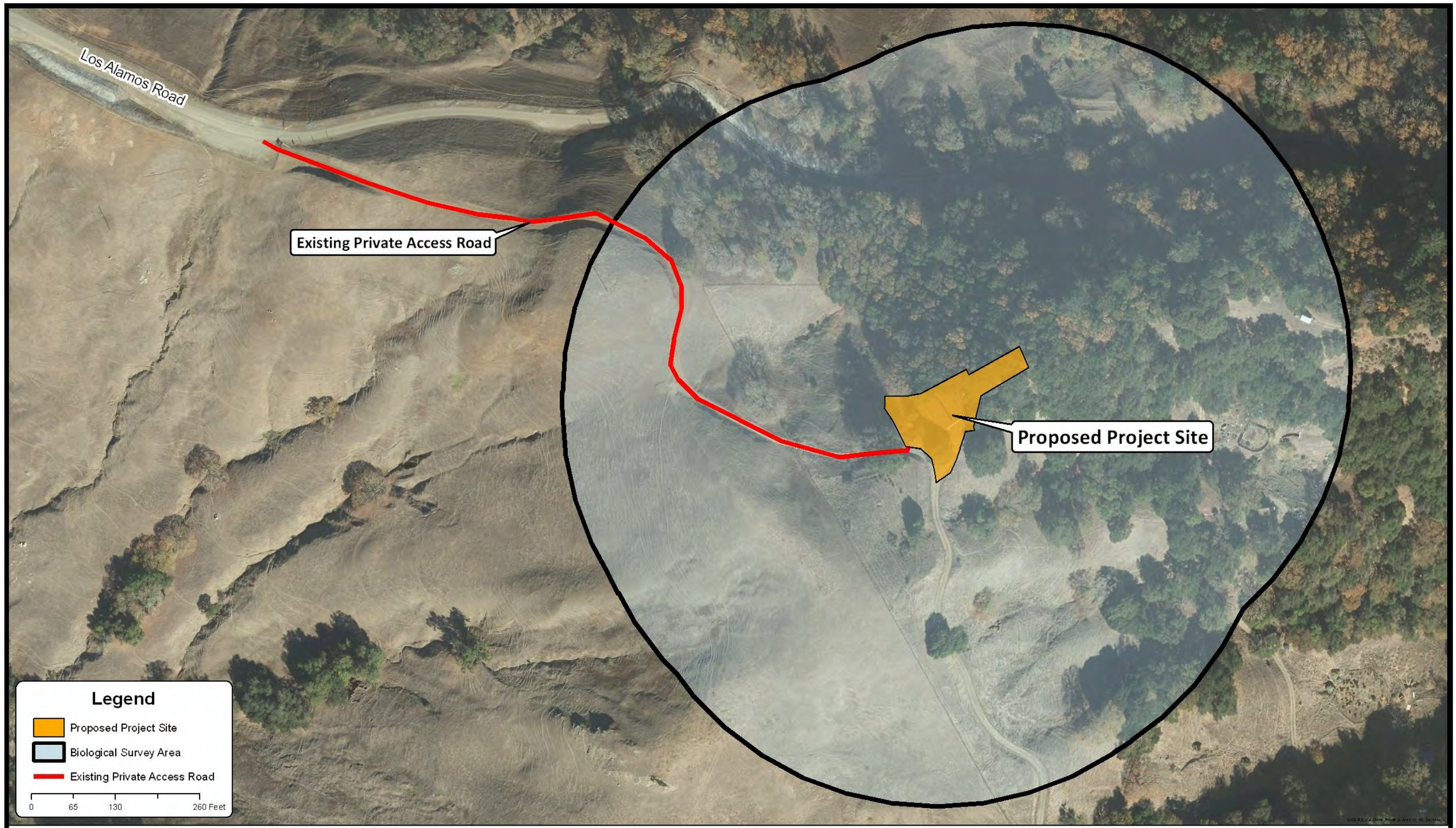
Synthesis Planning
6 Carmen Court
Novato, California 94945
Telephone (415) 328-7923

FIGURE 1

Project Vicinity Map

Joe Henderson
2000 Los Alamos Road
Santa Rosa, CA 95409
Phone: (707)838-8888

Figure 2. Aerial Map



Synthesis Planning
6 Carmen Court
Novato, California 94945
Telephone (415) 328-7923

FIGURE 2

Project Location Map

Joe Henderson
2000 Los Alamos Road
Santa Rosa, CA 95409
Phone: (707)838-8888

N

Figure 3. Site Plan

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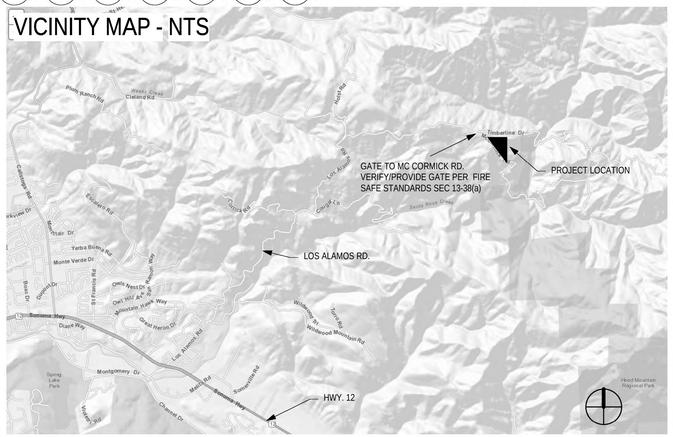
2000 LOS ALAMOS RD.
EXHIBITS TO ACCOMPANY
CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT APPLICATION

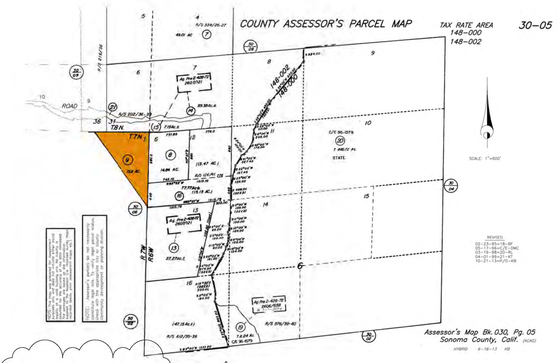
PROJECT SCOPE: PROPOSED REMODEL OF EXISTING AGRICULTURAL BARN TO PROVIDE CULTIVATION SPACES, PROCESSING, STORAGE, ACCESSIBLE TOILETS AND FEATURES, FIRE/LIFE/SAFETY UPGRADES AND OTHER CONDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR INTENDED USE. SITE IMPROVEMENTS INCLUDE: SONOMA COUNTY FIRE SAFE STANDARDS SITE IMPOROVEMENTS, ACCESSIBLE PARKING AND SITE CIRCULATION, GREENHOUSES, WATER STORAGE AND OTHER IMPROVEMENTS AS DISCRIBED HEREIN.

DRAWING INDEX

SHEET	DRAWING
A1.0	PROJECT DATA & SITE PLAN
A1.1	PROPOSED GROUND LVL. PLANS
A1.2	PROPOSED SECOND LVL. PLANS
A1.3	PROPOSED GREENHOUSE

VICINITY MAP - NTS





PARCEL MAP

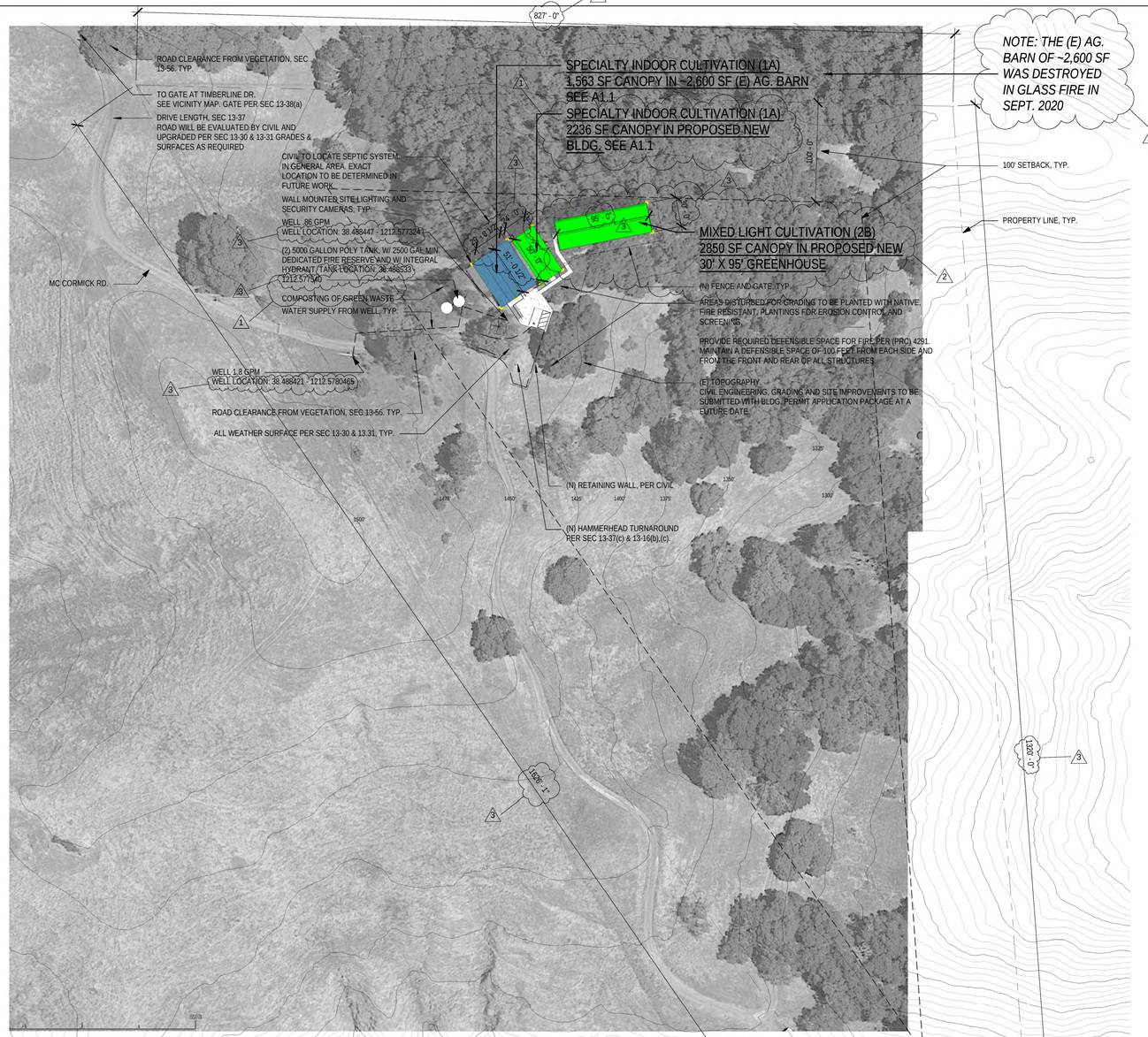


TURNOUT AND TURNAROUND KEY PLAN

PROJECT INFORMATION
APN: 030-050-009
Parcel Size: ~15 acres
Planning Area 5 - Santa Rosa
District 1 – Susan Gorin
Water Quality Control Board: North Coast Region
City Sphere of Influence: N/A
Area and Specific plan: Franz Valley Area Plan
Air Quality Control Board: Bay Area Air Quality Management District
Wet Weather Zone C – Santa Rosa
Land Use Policies: N/A
Land Use: RRD 200
Fire Protection: State
Planning Area Policies: N/A
Urban Service Area: N/A
Williamson Act: N/A
Zoning: RRD, B6 200, NONE
Ground Water Area: Zone 4 - Areas with low or highly variable water yield

CLIENT INFORMATION:
Joe Henderson
2000 Los Alamos Rd.
Santa Rosa (Sonoma County), CA
95448-9718

PROPERTY OWNER INFORMATION:
Joe Henderson
2000 Los Alamos Rd.
Santa Rosa (Sonoma County), CA
95448-9718



GENERAL NOTE: PLANNING IS SCHEMATIC AND, ALONG WITH OWNERS APPLICATION AND SUPPORT MATERIALS, IS INTENDED TO CONVEY THE DESCRIPTION, EXTENT, AND CONDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS OF THE PROJECT IN ENOUGH DETAIL TO FACILITATE THE COUNTY OF SONOMA'S CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT PROCESS.

DETAILED ENGINEERING, CALCULATIONS AND SPECIFICATIONS FOR SPECIFIC PORTIONS OF THE WORK WILL BE MADE FOLLOWING THE "CUP" PROCESS EITHER AS A WHOLE PACKAGE OR IN PHASES.

1 A1.0 CONCEPTUAL SITE PLAN
1/64" = 1'-0"

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TBE

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT
www.TBEarch.com
17189 VAILETTI DR.
SONOMA, CA 95476

CONTACT NAME:
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707 364-6455 CELL
ray@TBEarch.com

LICENSED ARCHITECT
RAY WILLETT
C35917
RENEWAL 08/31/2019
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

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TEAM DIRECTORY:
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BC Engineering Group
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adress: 2900 Cleveland Avenue, Suite C, Santa Rosa, CA 95403
phone: 707-542-4321
email: tb@bcengineeringgroup.com

No.	Description	Date
1	PLANNING COMMENTS REVISIONS	02/28/2018
2	CLIENT CHANGES - GREENHOUSE ADDED	07/16/2018
3	DIMENTIONS AND COORDINATES ADDED FOR STATE OF CA	05/21/19
4	GLASS FIRE AND ROAD TURNOUT REV.	02/02/2021

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT

LOS ALAMOS RD.

PROJECT DATA & SITE PLAN

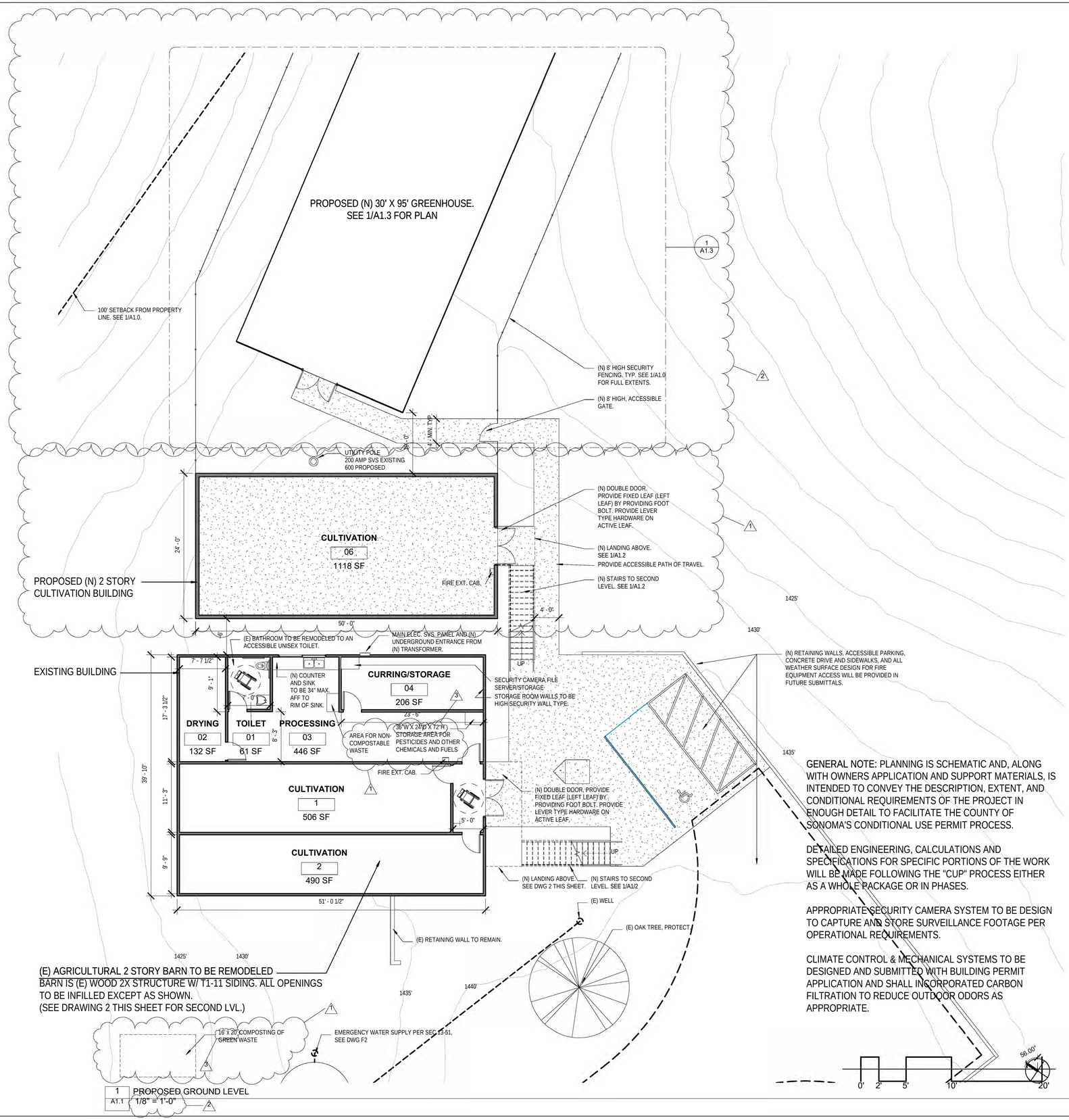
Project number	--
Date	August 28, 2017
Drawn by	TBE
Checked by	RW
Scale	As indicated

A1.0
Original drawing is 24"x36".

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Figure 4. Focused Site Plan

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STATE OF CALIFORNIA

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email: tb@bcengineeringgroup.com

No.	Description	Date
1	PLANNING COMMENTS REVISIONS	02/26/2018
2	CLIENT CHANGES - GREENHOUSE ADDED	07/16/2018
3	DIMENTIONS AND COORDINATES ADDED FOR STATE OF CA	05/21/19

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT

LOS ALAMOS RD.

PROPOSED GROUND LVL. PLANS

Project number	--
Date	August 28, 2017
Drawn by	TBE
Checked by	RW
Scale	1/8" = 1'-0"

A1.1
Original drawing is 24"x36".

FOR PLANNING ONLY - NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

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V. ISSUES RAISED BY THE PUBLIC OR AGENCIES

A referral packet was drafted and circulated to inform and solicit comments from selected relevant local and state agencies; and to special interest groups that were anticipated to take interest in the project. As of July 1, 2019, the project planner received ten responses to the project referral from:

- Sonoma County Fire and Emergency Services
- Sonoma County Department of Transportation & Public Works
- PRMD Project Review Health Specialist
- PRMD Natural Resources Geologist
- PRMD Building Division
- PRMD Grading & Storm Water Division
- Sonoma County Regional Parks
- Sonoma County Environmental Health
- Northwest Information Center of the California Historical Resources Information System

The referral responses included several requests for further information and included recommended draft use permit conditions of approval. Referral responses were not received from any state agencies.

Tribal Consultation Under AB52

Referrals were sent to the following Tribes on January 19, 2018:

- Cloverdale Rancheria of Pomo Indians
- Dry Creek Rancheria Band of Pomo Indians
- Lytton Rancheria of California
- Kashia Pomos Stewarts Point Rancheria
- Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria
- Middletown Rancheria Band of Pomo Indians
- Mishewal Wappo Tribe of Alexander Valley
- Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians

The request for consultation period ended February 19, 2018, with no Native American Tribes having requested consultation for the project.

Public Comments

Public comments on the proposed project have been received, which were subsequently entered into the project file. Issues raised as areas of potential environmental concern include: groundwater use and quality, odor, safety, traffic, and preservation of rural agricultural character and structures. These comments were not in response to a formal public review period or
County action.

VI. EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

This section analyzes the potential environmental impacts of this project based on the criteria set forth in the State CEQA Guidelines and the County's implementing ordinances and guidelines. For each item, one of four responses is given:

> **No Impact: The project would not have the impact described.** The project may have a beneficial effect, but there is no potential for the project to create or add increment to the impact described.
>
> **Less Than Significant Impact**: The project would have the impact described, but the impact would not be significant. Mitigation is not required, although the project applicant may choose to modify the project to avoid the impacts.
>
> **Potentially Significant Unless Mitigated:** The project would have the impact described, and the impact could be significant. One or more mitigation measures have been identified that will reduce the impact to a less than significant level.
>
> **Potentially Significant Impact:** The project would have the impact described, and the impact could be significant. The impact cannot be reduced to less than significant by incorporating mitigation measures. An environmental impact report must be prepared for this project.

Each question was answered by evaluating the project as proposed, that is, without considering the effect of any added mitigation measures. The Initial Study includes a discussion of the potential impacts and identifies mitigation measures to substantially reduce those impacts to a level of insignificance where feasible. All references and sources used in this Initial Study are listed in the Reference section at the end of this report and are incorporated herein by reference.

The applicant and operators for All Cali Farms Inc., have agreed to accept all mitigation measures listed in this Initial Study as conditions of approval for the proposed project, and to obtain all necessary permits, notify all contractors, agents and employees involved in project implementation and any new owners should the property be transferred to ensure compliance with the mitigation measures. However, cannabis permits require renewal and are not transferrable with the sale of the land like other Conditional Use Permits.

1. AESTHETICS:

Would the project:

a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

Comment:
The project site is not located in an area designated as visually sensitive by the Sonoma County General Plan or the Franz Valley Area Plan. The project is sited on a vegetated hillside. The project site vicinity is generally characterized by its rural quality, with ranch land and occasional residences. Potential views of the site from the neighboring Hood Mountain Regional Park and Sugarloaf Ridge State Park, Open Space Preserve to the south/east are protected by intervening topography and existing mature vegetation. Potential views of the site from the nearest public right of way to the north/west, Los Alamos Road, are protected by a ridgeline above the project site and mature vegetation between the road the site.

Project site development involves the construction of two new structures, a single story 2,850 square foot greenhouse and two story 2,236 square foot indoor cultivation building. These structures would be built immediately to the east of the previously existing 2,600 square foot cultivation building. The new two-story building would be of a similar height the previously existing cultivation building and therefor would match the overall level of structural development to previously existing conditions. Construction of the two new cultivation structures would require the removal of trees east of the current development. After tree removal, the site would still be protected by intervening vegetation and topography to the east that would protect any views from travelers of Los Alamos Road.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

Comment:
The project is not located on or visible from a state scenic highway (officially designated state scenic highways in Sonoma County are Highway 12 and Highway 116).

Significance Level: No Impact

c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?

Comment:
The existing visual character of the site and its surroundings is rural, primarily for agricultural and sparse residential uses. The proposed project and associated development would be consistent with the land use designation for the site and is not located in a Scenic Resources zoning development area. The project development would occur on an area of the property with slopes less than 30%.

Therefore, based on the County's "Visual Assessment Guidelines," the project site sensitivity would be considered "Moderate" because:

> *"The site or portion thereof is within a rural land use designation or an urban designation that does not meet the criteria above for low sensitivity, but the site has no land use or zoning designations protecting scenic resources. The project vicinity is characterized by rural or urban development but may include historic resources or be considered a gateway to a community. This category includes building or construction sites with visible slopes less than 30 percent or where there is significant natural features of aesthetic value that is visible from public roads or public use areas (i.e. parks, trails etc.)."*

Following County's "Visual Assessment Guidelines," public viewpoints were considered for

determining the project visibility to the public. As discussed in section 1.a, the project site is situated so that potential viewpoints from Los Alamos Road are shielded by either an intervening ridgeline and/or existing mature vegetation. Therefore, based on the County's "Visual Assessment Guidelines," the project site would be considered "Inevident" because:

> *"Project is generally not visible from public view because of intervening natural landforms or vegetation."*

The project's effect on the visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings was determined based on County's "Visual Assessment Guidelines: Table 3 – Thresholds of Significance for Visual Impact Analysis":

Table 3
Thresholds of Significance for
Visual Impact Analysis

Sensitivity	Visual Dominance			
	Dominant	***Co-Dominant***	***Subordinate***	***Inevident***
Maximum	Significant	Significant	Significant	Less than significant
High	Significant	Significant	Less than significant	Less than significant
Moderate	Significant	Less than significant	Less than significant	**Less than significant**
Low	Less than significant	Less than significant	Less than significant	Less than significant

Based on the project site's moderate visual sensitivity and inevident visual dominance, the project would be considered to have a less than significant effect on the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime view in the area?

Comment:
The project proposes cultivation lighting within the proposed and existing cultivation structures as well as for security lighting. Lights would be utilized in the greenhouse and indoor cultivation buildings during evening hours to stimulate longer day length and thus facilitate the cannabis plant growth cycle. Light fixtures within the greenhouse will be fully shield and downward casting. Lights in the indoor cultivation facilities and would be fully contained so that little to no light escapes. Exterior security lights would be installed around the perimeter of the cultivation facilities and would be fully shielded, downward facing, and motion-activated.

Overall, lighting provisions associated with the project would not be a source of substantial light or glare. Furthermore, as a condition of approval, all project lighting would be required to comply with County Code Section 26-88-254(f)(19) pertaining to lighting, in that: *"All lighting shall be fully shielded, downward casting and not spill over onto structures, other properties or the night sky. All indoor and mixed light operations shall be fully contained so that little to no light escapes. Light shall not escape at a level that is visible from neighboring properties between sunset and sunrise."*

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

2. AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES:

In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board.

Would the project:

a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?

Comment:
According to the California Department of Conservation Mapping and Monitoring Program, the project parcel is designated Grazing Land. Therefore, no Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance would be converted to non-agricultural use.

Significance Level: No Impact

b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or Williamson Act Contract?

Comment:
The project site is in the Resources and Rural Development zoning district, which allows up to one acre of commercial cannabis cultivation, plus on-site processing, with a Use Permit. The parcel is not subject to a Williamson Act Land Conservation Contract. Therefore, the project would not conflict with the existing zoning for agricultural use, or with a Williamson Act Contract.

Significance Level: No Impact

c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 4526) or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g)?

Comment:
The project site is not in a Timberland Production Zoning district, and no commercial timberland is present. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with or cause a rezoning of any forest land or timberland zoned Timberland Production.

Significance Level: No Impact

d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

Comment:
The project would not be located on land utilized or zoned for forest land, timberland, or timber production. Therefore, the project would not result in the loss or conversion of forest land.

Significance Level: No Impact

e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

Comment:
The project would not involve conversion of land currently used for agricultural purposes. Previously, approximately 20,000 square feet of vineyard was grown on the property, but the vineyard area has since gone fallow. The project would not affect the area in which the vineyard was grown.

The proposed cultivation operation would be located within an existing barn and within two new, proposed structures, including one building. The proposed sites for these new structures do not currently contain nor have recently contained land used for agriculture. The new building sites would need to be cleared of 38 (thirty-eight) existing trees, none of which compose designated forest land.

The project would not convert any designated farmland to non-agricultural use. The project would not convert any designated forest land to non-forest use.

Significance Level: No Impact

3. AIR QUALITY:

When available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or aid pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations.

Would the project:

a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

Comment:
Sonoma County is served by two air districts with distinct boundaries, jurisdictions, rules, and policies. The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) covers the southern portion of the County. The Northern Sonoma County Air Pollution Control District (NSCACD) covers the northern and coastal regions of the County. The proposed project lies within the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), which is currently designated as a nonattainment area for state and federal ozone standards, the state PM 10 standard, and the state and Federal PM 2.5 standard. The District has adopted an Ozone Attainment Plan and a Clean Air Plan in compliance with Federal and State Clean Air Acts. The following discussion considers whether the proposed project would conflict with or obstruct implementation of an applicable air quality plan maintained by this air district.

In April 2017, the BAAQMD adopted its *2017 Clean Air Plan: Spare the Air, Cool the Climate (Clean Air Plan),* which provides the BAAQMD's framework for ensuring air quality standards would be attained and maintained in the Bay Area in compliance with state and federal requirements (BAAQMD 2017c). The BAAQMD's 2017 *Clean Air Plan* is a multi-pollutant plan focused on protecting public health and the climate. Specifically, the primary goals of the 2017 Clean Air Plan are to:

- Attain all state and national quality standards;
- Eliminate disparities among Bay Area communities in cancer health risk from toxic area and contaminants; and
- Reduce Bay Area GHG Emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030, and 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.

The *Clean Air Plan* includes increases in regional construction, area, mobile, and stationary source activities and operations in its emission inventories and plans for achieving attainment of air quality standards. Chapter 5 of the *Clean Air Plan* contains the BAAQMD's strategy for achieving the plan's

climate and air quality goals. This control strategy is the backbone of the *Clean Air Plan.* It identifies 85 distinct control measures designed to comply with state and federal air quality standards and planning requirements, protect public health by reducing emissions of ozone precursors, PM, and TACs, and reduce greenhouse gases (GFG) emissions. The 85 control measures identified in the *Clean Air Plan* are grouped by nine economic based "sectors": Agriculture, Buildings, Energy, Natural and Working Lands, Stationary Sources, Super GHGs, Transportation, Waste, and Water. Most of the 85 control measures implemented at the local and regional level by municipal government and the BAAQMD and thus are not directly applicable to the proposed project. The proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the BAAQMD *Clean Air Plan* because: 1) It does not include significant sources of ozone precursor emissions, PM, or TACs (see also discussion b) and c) below); 2) It would not exacerbate or increase disparities in cancer risks from TAC emissions; and 3) the project is required, pursuant to the County's Municipal Code (Section 26-88-254(g)(3)), to provide electrical power through a combination of on-grid 100% renewable energy, an on-site zero net energy renewable energy system, or purchase of carbon offsets for power obtained from non-renewable resources, which would reduce GHG emissions from the project consistent with state reduction goals (see also Section 7, Greenhouse Gas Emissions).

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable Federal or State ambient air quality standard?

Comment:
State and Federal standards have been established for the "criteria pollutants": ozone, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide and particulates (PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$). The pollutants NOx (nitrogen oxides) and reactive organic gases (ROG) from ozone in the atmosphere in the presence of sunlight. The principal source of ozone precursors is vehicle emissions, although stationary internal combustion engines are also considered a source.

The proposed project is located within the jurisdiction of the BAAQMD. The project is not included in the BAAQMD Air Quality Guidelines screening criteria; however, a general comparison can be made with a similar land use. The BAAQMD's *CEQA Air Quality Guidelines* contain screening criteria to provide lead agencies with a conservative indication of whether a proposed project could result in potentially significant air quality impacts. Consistent with the BAAQMD's guidance, if a project meets all the screening criteria, then the project would result in a less than significant air quality impact and detailed air quality assessment is not required for the project.

In general, cannabis-related facilities are not a land use type identified in the BAAQMD *CEQA Air Quality Guidelines* screening criteria (BAAQMD, 2017, Table 3-1 page 3-5); however, a general comparison can be made with similar land use with similar emission sources (e.g., area sources such as heating, energy use, vehicular sources of emissions). The BAAQMD "general light industry" land use screening threshold was used for this air analysis. This land use type is based on the description in the institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual, 9th Edition, and is defined as (CAPCOA, 2017), "free standing facilities devoted to a single use. The facilities have an emphasis on activities other than manufacturing and typically have minimal office space." The "general light industry" land use has a screening size of 541,000 square feet (541 ksf) for operational criteria pollutants, and a screening size of 259 ksf for construction-related pollutants.

The San Francisco Bay Area Air Basin is an area of non-attainment for national and state ozone, state PM10, and national and state PM2.5 air quality standards. Regarding cumulative impacts, the BAAQMD's CEQA Air Quality Guidelines state (BAAQMD 2017, pg. 2-1):

> "SFBAAB's non-attainment status is attributed to the region's development history. Past, present, and future development projects contribute to the region's adverse air quality impacts on a cumulative basis. By its very nature, air pollution is largely a cumulative impact. No single project is sufficient in size to, by itself, result in nonattainment of ambient air quality standards. Instead, a

project's individual emissions contribute to existing cumulatively significant adverse air quality impacts. If a project's contribution to the cumulative impact is considerable, then the project's impact on air quality would be considered significant. In developing thresholds of significance for air pollutants, BAAQMD considered the emission levels for which a project's individual emissions would be cumulatively considerable. If a project exceeds the identified significance thresholds, its emissions would be cumulatively considerable, resulting in significant adverse air quality impacts to the region's existing air quality conditions. Therefore, additional analysis to assess cumulative impacts is unnecessary."

New sources of non-exhaust PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ would be generated from the project from new vehicle trips, construction of a new 2,400 square foot, two-story cultivation building and a 2,850 square foot greenhouse. There could be a significant short-term increase in construction vehicle emissions or emissions of dust (which would include PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$) during construction. These emissions would be reduced to a less than significant level with implementation of Mitigation Measure AIR-1.

Significance Level: Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Mitigation:
Mitigation Measure AIR-1 Construction Dust and Air Quality Control: The following dust and air quality control measures shall be included in the project:

1. A Construction Coordinator shall be designated by the project applicant, and a sign shall be posted on the site including the Coordinator's 24-hour phone number for public contact regarding dust, trackout, and air quality complaints. The Coordinator shall respond and take corrective action within 48 hours. The Coordinator shall report all complaints and their resolutions to Permit Sonoma staff.
2. Water or alternative dust control method shall be sprayed to control dust on construction areas, soil stockpiles, and staging areas during construction as directed by the County.
3. Trucks hauling soil, sand, and other loose materials over public roads shall cover the loads, or shall keep the loads at least two feet below the level of the sides of the container, or shall wet the load sufficiently to prevent dust emissions.
4. Vehicle speeds on unpaved areas shall be limited to 15 miles per hour.
5. Final surfacing (i.e., pavement or concrete, gravel, landscaping) shall be completed as soon as possible after earthwork is finished, unless seeding or soil binders are used.
6. Idling time of diesel-powered construction equipment shall be limited to five minutes. Signs shall be posted reminding workers of this idling restriction at all access points and equipment staging areas during construction of the proposed project.
7. All construction equipment shall be maintained and properly tuned in accordance with manufacturer's specifications and shall have a CARB-certified visible emissions evaluator check equipment prior to use at the site.
8. Trackout shall not be allowed at any active exit from the project site onto an adjacent paved public roadway or shoulder of a paved public roadway that exceeds cumulative 25 linear feet and creates fugitive dust visible emissions without cleaning up such trackout within 4 hours of when the Construction Coordinator identifies such excessive trackout, and shall not allow more than 1 quart of trackout to remain on the adjacent paved public roadway or the paved shoulder of the paved public roadway at the end of any workday.
9. Visible emissions of fugitive dust shall not be allowed during cleanup of any trackout that exceeds 20 percent opacity as determined by the Environmental Protection Agency in *Method 203B - Opacity Determination for Time-Exception Regulations* (August 2017).

   Trackout is defined by BAAQMD in *Regulation 6, Rule 6: Prohibition of Trackout* (August 2018) as any sand, soil, dirt, bulk materials or other solid particles from a site that adhere to or agglomerate on the exterior surfaces of vehicles (including tires), and subsequently fall or

are dislodged onto a paved public roadway or the paved shoulder of a paved public roadway on the path that vehicles follow at any exit and extending 50 feet out onto the paved public roadway beyond the boundary of the site. Material that has collected on the roadway from erosion is not trackout.

Mitigation Monitoring:
Mitigation Monitoring AIR-1 Construction Dust and Air Quality Control: Permit Sonoma staff shall verify that the AIR-1 measures are included on all site alteration, grading, building or improvement plans prior to issuance of grading or building permits. The applicant shall submit documentation to Permit Sonoma staff that a Construction Coordinator has been designated and that appropriate signage has been posted including the Coordinator's phone number. Documentation may include photographic evidence or a site inspection, at the discretion of Permit Sonoma staff.

c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Comment:
Sensitive receptors include hospitals, schools, convalescent facilities, and residential areas. The project site is located in a predominantly rural area, away from institutional receptors (the nearest is Austin Creek Elementary School about 3.65 miles southwest). The nearest off-site residence is greater than 500 feet from all cultivation operations. Based on the analysis in Section 3.a and 3.b, the project would not result in substantial pollutant exposure due to operations.

However, as described in section 3.b, there could be significant short-term increase in construction vehicle emissions or emission dust (which would include $PM_{2.5}$ and PM_{10}) during the construction of a new 2-story 2,236 square foot cultivation building, the 2,850 square foot greenhouse, expansion of the private roadand construction of a retaining wall. These construction period effects on air quality (i.e., dust, diesel exhaust), would be reduced to a less than significant level with implementation of Mitigation Measure AIR-1.

Significance Level: Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Mitigation:
Implement **Mitigation Measure AIR-1 Construction Dust and Air Quality Control.**

Mitigation Monitoring:
See **Mitigation Monitoring AIR-1 Construction Dust and Air Quality Control.**

d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

Comment:
Construction Odors
Construction equipment may generate odors during project construction; however, construction activities would be short-term, intermittent, and would cease upon completion of project construction. In addition, implementation of Mitigation Measure AIR-1 would reduce construction vehicle emissions which could contribute to odor and would not affect a substantial number of people. Therefore, the construction-related odor impact would be less than significant.

Greenhouse, Indoor Cultivation and Indoor Processing Odors
Cannabis cultivation and processing facilities are not listed as an odor-generating use in the BAAQMD *California Environmental Quality Act Air Quality Guidelines* (May 2017). However, the County's cannabis ordinance requires compliance with the following Zoning Code Operating Standard:

> *All indoor and mixed light cultivation operations and any drying, aging, trimming and packing facilities shall be equipped with odor control filtration and ventilation system(s) to control odors, humidity, and mold* (Sec. 26-88-254(g)(2).

The project includes an odor control plan. Every greenhouse and grow room will be fitted with carbon filters, circulation fans and exhaust fans. Carbon filters will also be installed in the support areas used for trimming and drying. The project also includes a 10 mph speed limit to reduce dust. Implementation of Mitigation Measure AIR-2 would ensure that odor release from structures would be reduced to a less than significant level.

Significance Level: Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Mitigation:
Mitigation Measure AIR-2: The cannabis cultivation building shall install and maintain an odor control air filtration and ventilation system that controls humidity and mold and ensures there will be no off-site odor from structures. Daily inspections shall be performed by the on-site manager. Inspections shall include verifying that all filtration equipment is functioning properly, checking that filters have been replaced on schedule, and shall include a walking tour through the interior and around the exterior of each cannabis-containing facility to document any noticeable odor (indoor cultivation/greenhouse, and both processing buildings).

Mitigation Monitoring:
Mitigation Monitoring AIR-2: County staff shall ensure that the odor control filtration and ventilation system(s) are listed on all building and/or improvement plans, prior to issuance of building permits. In the event that multiple verified odor complaints are received, Permit Sonoma staff may bring this matter back to the Board of Zoning Adjustments for review of additional measures to reduce outdoor odor generation, including use of engineered solutions such as Vapor-Phase Systems (Fog Systems).

4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES:

Would the project:

a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

Regulatory Framework
The following discussion identifies federal, state and local environmental regulations that serve to protect sensitive biological resources relevant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review process.

Federal

Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA)
FESA establishes a broad public and federal interest in identifying, protecting, and providing for the recovery of threatened or endangered species. The Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Commerce are designated in FESA as responsible for identifying endangered and threatened species and their critical habitat, carrying out programs for the conservation of these species, and rendering opinions regarding the impact of proposed federal actions on listed species. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) are charged with implementing and enforcing the FESA. USFWS has authority over terrestrial and continental aquatic species, and NOAA Fisheries has authority over species that spend all or part of their life cycle at sea, such as salmonids. Section 9 of FESA prohibits the unlawful "take" of any listed fish or wildlife species. Take, as defined by FESA, means "to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such action." USFWS's regulations define harm to mean "an act which actually kills or injures wildlife." Such an act may include "significant habitat modification or degradation where it

actually kills or injures wildlife by significantly impairing essential behavioral patterns, including breeding, feeding or sheltering" (50 CFR § 17.3). Take can be permitted under FESA pursuant to Sections 7 and 10. Section 7 provides a process for take permits for federal projects or projects subject to a federal permit, and Section 10 provides a process for incidental take permits for projects without a federal nexus. FESA does not extend the take prohibition to federally listed plants on private land, other than prohibiting the removal, damage, or destruction of such species in violation of state law.

Critical Habitat
Critical habitat is a term defined in the ESA as a specific geographic area that contains features essential for the conservation of a threatened or endangered species and that may require special management and protection. The ESA requires federal agencies to consult with USFWS to conserve listed species on their lands and to ensure that any activities or projects they fund, authorize, or carry out will not jeopardize the survival of a threatened or endangered species. In consultation for those species with critical habitat, federal agencies must also ensure that their activities or projects do not adversely modify critical habitat to the point that it will no longer aid in the species' recovery. In many cases, this level of protection is similar to that already provided to species by the ESA jeopardy standard. However, areas that are currently unoccupied by the species but which are needed for the species' recovery are protected by the prohibition against adverse modification of critical habitat.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (MBTA)
The Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) (16 USC. 703 et seq.), Title 50 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 10, prohibits taking, killing, possessing, transporting, and importing of migratory birds, parts of migratory birds, and their eggs and nests, except when specifically authorized by the Department of the Interior. As used in the act, the term "take" is defined as meaning, "to pursue, hunt, capture, collect, kill or attempt to pursue, hunt, shoot, capture, collect or kill, unless the context otherwise requires." With a few exceptions, most birds are considered migratory under the MBTA. Disturbances that cause nest abandonment and/or loss of reproductive effort or loss of habitat upon which these birds depend would be in violation of the MBTA.

Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act
The Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act that was first passed in 1940 regulates take, possession, sale, purchase, barter, transport, import and export of any bald or golden eagle or their parts (e.g., nests, eggs, young) unless allowed by permit (16 U.S.C. 668(a); 50 CFR 22). Take was broadly defined to include shoot, wound, kill, capture, collect, molest, or disturb. In the 1972 amendments, penalties for violations were raised to a maximum of fine $250,000 for an individual or a maximum of two years in prison for a felony conviction, with a doubling for organizations instead of individuals.

State

California Endangered Species Act (CESA)
Provisions of CESA protect state-listed threatened and endangered species. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) is charged with establishing a list of endangered and threatened species. CDFW regulates activities that may result in "take" of individuals (i.e., "hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill"). Habitat degradation or modification is not expressly included in the definition of "take" under the California Fish and Game Code (CFGC), but CDFW has interpreted "take" to include the killing of a member of a species which is the proximate result of habitat modification.

California Fully Protected Species and Species of Special Concern
The classification of California "fully protected" (CFP) was the CDFW's initial effort to identify and provide additional protection to those animals that were rare or faced possible extinction. Lists were created for fish, amphibians and reptiles, birds, and mammals. Most of the species on these lists have subsequently been listed under CESA and/or FESA. The Fish and Game Code sections (fish at §5515, amphibians and reptiles at §5050, birds at §3503 and §3511, and mammals at §4150 and §4700) dealing with "fully protected" species state that these species "…may not be taken or possessed at any time and no provision of this code or any other law shall be construed to authorize

the issuance of permits or licenses to take any fully protected species," although take may be authorized for necessary scientific research. This language makes the "fully protected" designation the strongest and most restrictive regarding the "take" of these species. In 2003, the code sections dealing with "fully protected" species were amended to allow the CDFW to authorize take resulting from recovery activities for state-listed species.

California Species of Special Concern (CSC) are broadly defined as animals not listed under the FESA or CESA, but which are nonetheless of concern to the CDFW because they are declining at a rate that could result in listing or because they historically occurred in low numbers and known threats to their persistence currently exist. This designation is intended to result in special consideration for these animals by the CDFW, land managers, consulting biologist, and others, and is intended to focus attention on the species to help avert the need for costly listing under FESA and CESA and cumbersome recovery efforts that might ultimately be required. This designation also is intended to stimulate collection of additional information on the biology, distribution, and status of poorly known at-risk species, and focus research and management attention on them. Although these species generally have no special legal status, they are given special consideration under CEQA during project review.

Nesting Birds
Nesting birds, including raptors, are protected under CFGC Section 3503, which reads, "It is unlawful to take, possess, or needlessly destroy the nest or eggs of any bird, except as otherwise provided by this code or any regulation made pursuant thereto." In addition, under CFGC Section 3503.5, "it is unlawful to take, possess, or destroy any birds in the orders Falconiformes or Strigiformes (birds-of-prey) or to take, possess, or destroy the nest or eggs of any such bird except as otherwise provided by this code or any regulation adopted pursuant thereto". Passerines and non-passerine land birds are further protected under CFGC Section 3513. As such, CDFW typically recommends surveys for nesting birds that could potentially be directly (e.g., actual removal of trees/vegetation) or indirectly (e.g., noise disturbance) impacted by project-related activities. Disturbance during the breeding season could result in the incidental loss of fertile eggs or nestlings, or otherwise lead to nest abandonment. Disturbance that causes nest abandonment and/or loss of reproductive effort is considered "take" by CDFW.

Non-Game Mammals
Sections 4150-4155 of the CFGC protect non-game mammals, including bats. Section 4150 states "A mammal occurring naturally in California that is not a game mammal, fully protected mammal, or fur-bearing mammal is a nongame mammal. A non-game mammal may not be taken or possessed except as provided in this code or in accordance with regulations adopted by the commission." The non-game mammals that may be taken or possessed are primarily those that cause crop or property damage. Bats are classified as a non-game mammal and are protected under CFGC. Bat species designated as "High Priority" by the Western Bat Working Group (WBWG) qualify for legal protection under Section 15380(d) of the CEQA Guidelines. Species designated High Priority" are defined as "imperiled or are at high risk of imperilment based on available information on distribution, status, ecology and known threats.

Other Special-Status Plants – California Native Plant Society
The California Native Plant Society (CNPS), a non-profit plant conservation organization, publishes and maintains an Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California in both hard copy and electronic version (http://www.cnps.org/cnps/rareplants/inventory/).

The Inventory employs the California Rare Plant Ranking (CRPR) to assign plants to the following categories:

1A	Presumed extinct in California
1B	Rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere
2	Rare, threatened, or endangered in California, but more common elsewhere
3	Plants for which more information is needed – A review list
4	Plants of limited distribution – A watch list

Additional endangerment codes are assigned to each taxon as follows:

1 Seriously endangered in California (over 80% of occurrences threatened/high degree of immediacy of threat)
2 Fairly endangered in California (20-80% occurrences threatened)
3 Not very endangered in California (<20% of occurrences threatened, or no current threats known)

CRPR 1A, 1B, and 2 plants consist of individuals that may qualify for listing by state and federal agencies. As part of the CEQA process, such species should be fully considered, as they meet the definition of threatened or endangered under the NPPA and Sections 2062 and 2067 of the CFGC. CRPR 3 and 4 species are considered to be plants about which more information is needed or are uncommon enough that their status should be regularly monitored. Such plants may be eligible or may become eligible for state listing, and CNPS and CDFW recommend that these species be evaluated for consideration during the preparation of CEQA documents.

Native Plant Protection Act
The Native Plant Protection Act (NPPA) was created in 1977 with the intent to preserve, protect, and enhance rare and endangered plants in California (CFGC Sections 1900 to 1913). The NPPA is administered by CDFW, which has the authority to designate native plants as endangered or rare and to protect them from "take." CDFW maintains a list of plant species that have been officially classified as endangered, threatened or rare. These special-status plants have special protection under California law and projects that directly impact them may not qualify for a categorical exemption under the CEQA Guidelines.

Comment:
Plant communities within the proposed project site include: 1) annual grassland composed of introduced grasses and broadleaf weedy species, 2) montane hardwood forest dominated by a mix of tanbark oak (*Lithocarpus densiflorus* var. *densiflorus*), coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia* var. *agrifolia*), canyon live oak (*Quercus chrysolepis*), California buckeye (*Aesculus californica*), and madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*), and 3) ruderal disturbed habitat with disturbed soils and active land uses.

The project site[1] and surrounding 500-foot buffer area was evaluated for the potential presence of special-status wildlife and plant species and their habitats on September 20, 2017 and May 24, 2019 by Synthesis Planning. The potential occurrences of special-status plant and animal species on the project site were initially evaluated by conducting a database records search of CDFW's California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB), CNPS Electronic Inventory, USFWS Sacramento Office Online Electronic Database of Threatened and Endangered Species, and USFWS Environmental Conservation Online System (ECOS) Critical Habitat Portal. The potential occurrences of special-status species were then evaluated in the field based on the habitat requirements of each species relative to the conditions observed during the habitat evaluation.

Special-Status Plant Species

Special-status plants are defined here to include: (1) plants that are federal- or state-listed as rare, threatened or endangered, (2) federal and state candidates for listing, (3) plants assigned a Rank of 1 through 4 by the CNPS Inventory, and (4) plants that qualify under the definition of "rare" in the CEQA Guidelines, section 15380 (Endangered, Rare, or Threatened Species).

Federal and state resource agency database searches conducted by Synthesis Planning yielded a total of 83 plant species that were initially identified in the Biological Assessment report as having potential to occur on the project site. Based upon results of the literature search and habitat evaluation, a focused special-status plant survey[2] was conducted on May 24, 2018 to confirm the

[1] The term "project site" is used to define the project footprint (i.e. a 0.16-acre proposed cultivation area and private road access, and parking areas).
[2] Surveys were conducted in accordance with CDFW Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special-Status Native Plant Populations and Natural Communities (CDFW 2018), USFWS Guidelines for Conducting

presence or absence of special-status plant species on the project site and 500- foot buffer area. All plants encountered were identified to the taxonomic level necessary to detect rare plants if present, and the surveys were conducted during the documented blooming periods of all species with potential to occur. No special-status plants were detected during the surveys, nor would they expected to be occur on the project site due to past site disturbances and the lack of required habitat types for these species.

Significance Level: No Impact

Special Status Wildlife Species

Special-status wildlife species include those species listed as endangered or threatened under the FESA or CESA; candidates for listing by the USFWS or CDFW; California fully protected and species of special concern; non-game mammals protected by Sections 4150-4155 of the CFGC; and nesting birds protected by the CDFW under CFGC Sections 3503 and 3513.

Based on a search of current resource agency database records within the Kenwood USGS 7.5 minute quadrangle, it was determined that special-status bat species, amphibian species, nesting songbirds and raptors have potential to occur on and adjacent to the project site. Potential impacts and associated impact mitigation measures are discussed below.

Pallid Bat (*Antrozous pallidus*), California Species of Special Concern and Western Bat Working Group High Priority. The pallid bat is found in a variety of low elevation habitats throughout California. It selects a variety of day roosts including rock outcrops, mines, caves, hollow trees, buildings, and bridges. Night roosts are usually found under bridges, but also in caves, mines, and buildings. Pregnant bats form maternity colonies in early April; such colonies may support a dozen to 100 individuals. Pallid bats are highly sensitive to anthropogenic disturbance. Unlike most bats, pallid bats primarily feed on large ground-dwelling arthropods and are somewhat unique among local bats in that they may forage on the ground. While no individual pallid bats were observed by Synthesis Planning, numerous trees on the project site provide potentially suitable roosting habitat for pallid bat. This species may also forage on or adjacent to the project site. Tree removal activities and noise and vibration created from project construction equipment may impact pallid bat maternity/roost sites which could lead to direct mortality of individuals or colonies. Bats that forage near the ground could be subject to crushing or disturbance by vehicles driving at dusk, dawn, or during the night. Impacts to this species would be considered potentially significant. Implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1 shall be required to reduce potential impacts to a less-than-significant level.

Special-Status Amphibian Species. No streams, wetlands, or ponds are present on or adjacent to the project site; therefore, no impacts to breeding special-status amphibians or their breeding habitat would occur. The nearest CNDDB-documented occurrences of State species of concern red-bellied newt (*Taricha rivularis*) and California giant salamander (*Dicamptodon ensatus*) and state candidate Threatened foothill yellow-legged frog (*Rana boylii*) are documented from Santa Rosa Creek, located approximately one mile southeast of the project site. However, no special-status amphibians were observed during the September 2017 or May 2019 field surveys. The site is not located within critical habitat California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*) and the nearest known occurrence of this species is approximately 5.4 miles to the south in Trione-Annadel State Park. No suitable amphibian estivation burrow sites (e.g., ground squirrel burrows) were observed during the field surveys and the site is not near any aquatic breeding habitat; however, the Biological Assessment report concludes that upland estivation habitat on the project site is marginally suitable for California giant salamander. There is a very low potential for special-status amphibians to disperse onto the project site given the distance to offsite aquatic breeding habitat. Therefore, it is highly unlikely for these species to be present in uplands on the site. Implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-2 would reduce any potential impact to special-status amphibians to a less-than-significant level.

Other Protected Nesting Birds. Vegetation communities on the project site provide suitable nesting

and Reporting Botanical Inventories for Federally Listed, Proposed, and Candidate Plants (USFWS 2000), and CNPS Rare Plant Monitoring Guidelines (CNPS 2011).

and foraging habitat for resident and migratory songbird and raptor species that may occur within and adjacent to the project site. Nesting birds may nest within trees, shrubs, grasses, shallow scrapes on bare ground, and man-made structures on the project site. If tree removal and other construction activities occur during the avian breeding season (generally February 1 through August 31), injury to individuals or nest abandonment could occur. In addition, noise and vibration from construction activities could temporarily disturb nesting or foraging activities, potentially resulting in the abandonment of nest sites. The loss of an active nest of common or special-status bird species would be considered a violation of CFGC Sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3513. This would be considered a significant impact pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines. Implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-3 shall be required to reduce potential nesting birds impacts to a less-than-significant level.

Significance Level: Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Mitigation:

Mitigation Measure BIO-1 Environmental Awareness Training: Environmental training shall be provided to all persons working on the project site prior to the initiation of project-related activities. Training materials and briefings shall include a description of all biological resources that may be found on or in the vicinity of the project site, the laws and regulations that protect those resources, the consequences of non-compliance with laws and regulations, instructions for inspecting equipment each morning prior to activities, and a contact person in the event that protected biological resources are discovered on the site.

Mitigation Measure BIO-2 Pallid Bat Pre-Construction Survey
A qualified biologist shall conduct a pre-activity survey for pallid bat and other bat species protected under CFGC no more than seven (7) days prior to site activity commencing and within a 100-foot buffer of the project site. Following the pre-activity survey, the project proponent shall implement the following mitigation measures to avoid significant impacts to bat roosting and maternity sites:

- If the qualified biologist does not detect bat activity during the pre-activity survey, work may proceed as planned. However, if bat activity is detected, the following measures apply.
- If bat activity is recorded during the pre-activity survey from May 1 through August 31, it shall be considered a maternity roost. Site disturbance shall be prohibited in and/or near the roosting site for the duration of the maternity season and at a distance determined by the qualified biologist, typically 100 feet or more.
- If bat activity is detected outside the maternity season (September 1 through April 30), the following measures shall be implemented:
    - All tree snags (dead and/or dying trees with potential cavities for roosting) shall be surveyed by a qualified bat biologist no more than 7 days before the onset of vegetation removal and/or site disturbance. During tree removal (following the qualified bat biologist survey), tree limbs without cavities shall be removed first and left to remain overnight. Main trunks of the trees shall be removed on the following day, giving bats sufficient time to vacate potential cavities and/or exfoliating bark roosts following initial disturbance.

Mitigation Measure BIO-3: Special-Status Amphibian Pre-Construction Survey: Pre-construction surveys for California giant Salamander and red-bellied newt shall be performed within 48 hours of initiation of project activities (including initial ground disturbing activities). The search area will encompass a 50-foot radius around all work sites. If California giant salamander or red-bellied newt are encountered during the surveys, all work in the area shall be placed on hold while findings are reported to CDFW, and it is determined what, if any, further actions must be followed to prevent possible take of these species.

Mitigation Measure BIO-4: Prevent Disturbance to Nesting Birds: If initial ground disturbance or vegetation removal occurs during the breeding season (February 1 through August 31), a qualified biologist shall conduct a breeding bird survey no more than 14 days prior to ground disturbance to determine if any birds are nesting in trees adjacent to the project site. If active nests are found close enough to the project site to affect breeding success, the biologist shall establish an appropriate exclusion zone around the nest. This exclusion zone may be modified depending on the species, nest location, and existing visual buffers, but typically would entail a minimum of 500 feet for raptor species and 300 feet for other migratory species. Once all young have become independent of the nest, vegetation removal and grading may take place in the former exclusion zone. If initial ground disturbance is delayed or there is a break in project activities of more than 14 days within the bird-nesting season, then a follow-up nesting bird survey shall be performed to ensure no nests have been established in the interim.

Mitigation Monitoring:
Mitigation Monitoring BIO-1, BIO-2, BIO-3 and BIO-4: Prior to issuance of any grading permit(s) and through completion of initial site disturbance, the County shall review the results of all pre-construction surveys and any measures recommended by the biologist to avoid sensitive species and their habitat. All measures shall be noted on the final project plans.

b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

Regulatory Framework

California Fish and Game Code Section 1600-1603
Streams, lakes, and riparian vegetation, as habitat for fish and other wildlife species, are subject to jurisdiction by CDFW under Sections 1600-1616 of the CFGC. Any activity that will do one or more of the following would require a 1602 Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement: (1) substantially obstruct or divert the natural flow of a river, stream, or lake, (2) substantially change or use any material from the bed, channel, or bank of a river, stream, or lake, or (3) deposit or dispose of debris, waste, or other material containing crumbled, flaked, or ground pavement where it can pass into a river, stream, or lake. The term “stream,” which includes creeks and rivers, is defined in the California Code of Regulations (CCR) as follows: “a body of water that flows at least periodically or intermittently through a bed or channel having banks and supports fish or other aquatic life.” This includes watercourses having a surface or subsurface flow that supports or has supported riparian vegetation” (14 CCR 1.72). In addition, the term “stream” can include ephemeral streams, dry washes, watercourses with subsurface flows, canals, aqueducts, irrigation ditches, and other means of water conveyance if they support aquatic life, riparian vegetation, or stream-dependent terrestrial wildlife (CDFW 1994). Riparian vegetation is defined as “vegetation which occurs in and/or adjacent to a stream and is dependent on, and occurs because of, the stream itself” (CDFW 1994). In addition to impacts to jurisdictional streambeds, removal of riparian vegetation also requires a Section 1602 Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement from CDFW.

Sensitive Natural Communities
Sensitive natural communities are vegetation communities and habitats that are either unique in constituent components, of relatively limited distribution in the region, or of particularly high wildlife value. These communities may or may not necessarily contain special-status species. Sensitive natural communities are usually identified in local or regional plans, policies or regulations, or by the CDFW (i.e., CNDDB) or the USFWS. The CNDDB identifies a number of natural communities as rare, which are given the highest inventory priority. Impacts to sensitive natural communities and habitats must be considered and evaluated under the CEQA California Code of Regulations (CCR): Title 14, Div. 6, Chap. 3, Appendix G.

California Oak Woodland Statute
In September 2004, State Bill 1334 was passed and added to the State Public Resources Code as Statute 21083.4, requiring Counties to determine in their CEQA documents whether a project in its

jurisdiction may result in a conversion of oak woodlands that will have a significant effect on the environment. In addition, if the County determines that a project may result in a significant impact to oak woodlands, the County shall require one or more of the following mitigation alternatives to mitigate for the impact:

1) Conserving oak woodlands through the use of conservation easements.
2) Plant an appropriate number of trees, including maintaining the plantings and replacing dead or diseased trees; required maintenance of trees terminates seven years after the trees are planted; this type of mitigation shall not fulfill more than half of the mitigation requirement for the project; this type of mitigation may also be used to restore former oak woodlands.
3) Contribute funds to the Oak Woodlands Conservation Fund.
4) Other mitigation measures developed by the County.

The CFGC (Section 1361) defines oak woodland habitat as "an oak stand with a greater than 10 percent canopy cover or that may have historically supported greater than 10 percent canopy cover."

Comment:
Sensitive vegetation communities include riparian habitats or other sensitive natural communities identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or designated by the USFWS, NOAA Fisheries, and CDFW. The project site does not include any riparian habitat or natural community identified as rare in the CNDDB. However, one sensitive vegetation community, oak woodland, previously referred to as "montane hardwood forest", occurs on the project site. Oak woodlands are protected by state law (Public Resources Code Section 21083.4, see directly above). Project-related impacts to oak woodland would include the removal of at minimum 26 native trees within the oak woodland community that are protected by the Sonoma County Tree Protection Ordinance.

Significance Level: Less than Significant

c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

Regulatory Framework

Federal

The Clean Water Act (CWA)
The CWA is the primary federal law regulating water quality. The implementation of the CWA is the responsibility of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). However, the EPA depends on other agencies, such as the individual states and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), to assist in implementing the CWA. The objective of the CWA is to "restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Nation's waters." Section 404 and 401 of the CWA apply to activities that would impact waters of the U.S. The USACE enforces Section 404 of the CWA and the California State Water Resources Control Board enforces Section 401.

Section 404. As part of its mandate under Section 404 of the CWA, the EPA regulates the discharge of dredged or fill material into "waters of the U.S.". "Waters of the U.S." include territorial seas, tidal waters, and non-tidal waters in addition to wetlands and drainages that support wetland vegetation, exhibit ponding or scouring, show obvious signs of channeling, or have discernible banks and high-water marks. Wetlands are defined as those areas "that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions" (33 CFR 328.3(b)). The discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the U.S. is prohibited under the CWA except when it is in compliance with Section 404 of the CWA. Enforcement authority for Section 404 was given to the USACE, which it accomplishes under its regulatory branch. The EPA has veto authority over the USACE's administration of the Section 404 program and may override a USACE decision with respect to

permitting. A Water Quality Certification or waiver pursuant to Section 401 of the CWA is required for Section 404 permit actions (see below).

Section 401. Any applicant for a federal permit to impact waters of the U.S. under Section 404 of the CWA, including Nationwide Permits where pre-construction notification is required, must also provide to the USACE a certification or waiver from the State of California. The "401 Certification" is provided by the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) through the local Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). The RWQCB issues and enforces permits for discharge of treated water, landfills, storm-water runoff, filling of any surface waters or wetlands, dredging, agricultural activities and wastewater recycling. The RWQCB recommends the "401 Certification" application be made at the same time that any applications are provided to other agencies, such as the USACE, USFWS, or NOAA Fisheries. The application is not final until completion of environmental review under the CEQA. The application to the RWQCB is similar to the pre-construction notification that is required by the USACE. It must include a description of the habitat that is being impacted, a description of how the impact is proposed to be minimized and proposed mitigation measures with goals, schedules, and performance standards. Mitigation must include a replacement of functions and values, and replacement of wetland at a minimum ratio of 2:1, or twice as many acres of wetlands provided as are removed. The RWQCB looks for mitigation that is on site and in-kind, with functions and values as good as or better than the water-based habitat that is being removed.

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)

The NPDES program requires permitting for activities that discharge pollutants into waters of the United States. This includes discharges from municipal, industrial, and construction sources. These are considered point-sources from a regulatory standpoint. Generally, these permits are issued and monitored under the oversight of the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and administered by each regional water quality control board. Construction activities that disturb one acre or more (whether a single project or part of a larger development) are required to obtain coverage under the state's General Permit for Dischargers of Storm Water Associated with Construction Activity. All dischargers are required to obtain coverage under the Construction General Permit. The activities covered under the Construction General Permit include clearing, grading, and other disturbances. The permit requires preparation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) with a monitoring program. The project will require coverage under the Construction General Permit.

State

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act

The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Act (Porter-Cologne Act) (California Water Code § 13260) requires "any person discharging waste, or proposing to discharge waste, within any region that could affect the "Waters of the State" to file a report of discharge with the RWQCB through an application for waste discharge. Waters of the State are defined by the Porter-Cologne Act as "any surface water or groundwater, including saline waters, within the boundaries of the state." The RWQCB protects all waters in its regulatory scope, but has special responsibility for isolated wetlands and headwaters. These water bodies have high resource value, are vulnerable to filling, and may not be regulated by other programs, such as Section 404 of the CWA. If a project does not require a federal permit, but does involve dredge or fill activities that may result in a discharge to Waters of the State, the Water Board has the option to regulate the dredge and fill activities under its state authority through its Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR) program.

State Water Resources Control Board Cannabis Cultivation Policy

The purpose of the Cannabis Cultivation Policy (Policy) is to ensure that the diversion of water and discharge of waste associated with cannabis cultivation does not have a negative impact on water quality, aquatic habitat, riparian habitat, wetlands, and springs. The Policy establishes principles and guidelines for cannabis cultivation activities to protect water quality and instream flows. Cannabis cultivation legislation enacted California Water Code (Water Code) section 13149, which directs the State Water Board, in consultation with the CDFW, to adopt interim

and long-term principles and guidelines for the diversion and use of water for cannabis cultivation in areas where cannabis cultivation may have the potential to substantially affect instream flows. The legislation requires the State Water Board to establish these principles and guidelines as part of a state policy for water quality control.[3] Additionally, Business and Professions Code section 26060.1(b) requires that these principles and guidelines be included as conditions in cannabis cultivation licenses issued by the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA). The State Water Board has primary enforcement responsibility for the principles and guidelines and shall notify CDFA of any enforcement action taken.[4]

Comment:
The Biological Assessment report prepared for the project site (Synthesis Planning December 2017) did not identify any potential for wetlands on the project site or surrounding 500-foot buffer. The project would have no impact on state or federally protected wetlands.

Significance Level: No Impact

d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

Comment:
Wildlife corridors are linear and/or regional habitats that provide connectivity between or to other naturally vegetated open spaces. Wildlife corridors can consist of a sequence of stepping-stones across the landscape (e.g., discontinuous areas of habitat such as isolated wetlands), continuous lineal strips of vegetation and habitat (e.g., riparian strips and ridge lines), or they may be parts of larger habitat areas selected for their known or likely importance to local wildlife. Providing functional habitat connectivity between natural areas is essential to sustaining healthy wildlife populations and allowing for the continued dispersal of native plant and animal species. The project site does not contain drainages or other landscape features that would function as important movement corridors. The project site is located in a rural area of Sonoma County and would not fragment existing wildlife corridors that provide habitat connectivity in the area.

The project site only contains upland habitat for amphibians, so no breeding or nursery sites would be impacted. Further, amphibians would not be likely to use the project site as a movement corridor given its distance from known breeding sites and lack of a protected migration corridor, such as a drainageway. Trees, grassland, and structures on the site could provide roosting, nesting, or burrowing habitat for bats and birds. Implementation of pre-construction surveys prior to initiation of construction activities would reduce the potential impact to a less-than-significant level.

Significance Level: Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Mitigation:
Implement **Mitigation Measures BIO-1, BIO-2, BIO-3 and BIO-4.**

Mitigation Monitoring:
See **Mitigation Monitoring BIO-1, BIO-2, BIO-3 and BIO-4.**

e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as tree preservation policy or ordinance?

[3] Water Code section 13149(b)(2). The board shall adopt principles and guidelines under this section as part of state policy for water quality control adopted pursuant to Article 3 (commencing with Section13140) of Chapter 3 of Division 7. Water Code section 13142 outlines specific requirements for a state policy for water quality control, which this Policy implements.
[4] Water Code section 13149(b)(5).

Regulatory Framework

Sonoma County General Plan

The *Sonoma County General Plan 2020* (Sonoma County 2008) Land Use Element and Open Space & Resource Conservation Element both contain goals, objectives, and policies to protect natural resource lands including, but not limited to, biotic areas, special status species habitat, marshes and wetlands, sensitive natural communities, and habitat connectivity corridors. The policies below provide for protection of biotic habitats both within and outside the designated areas. Following are the types of biotic habitat addressed by the policies in this section that are pertinent to the proposed project:

Special-Status Species Habitat
Special-status species are plant and animals which are listed or candidate species under the Federal or State Endangered Species Acts and other species considered rare enough to warrant special consideration. Reported occurrences of special-status species are compiled by the California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDB) of the CDFW and are routinely updated as new information becomes available. Detailed surveys are typically necessary to confirm the presence or absence of special-status species.

Sensitive Natural Communities
CDFW has identified certain natural habitats as sensitive natural communities which are rare and vulnerable to further loss. Sensitive natural communities identified in Sonoma County include coastal salt marsh, brackish water marsh, freshwater marsh, freshwater seeps, native grasslands, several types of forest and woodland (including riparian, valley oak, Oregon white oak, black oak, buckeye, Sargent cypress, and pygmy cypress), old growth redwood and Douglas fir forest, mixed serpentine chaparral, coastal scrub, prairie, bluff, and dunes. Many of these communities support populations of special-status species and are important to native wildlife.

Sonoma County Tree Protection Ordinance

The Sonoma County Tree Protection Ordinance (Sonoma County Code of Ordinances, Chapter 26, Article 88, Sec. 26-88-010 [m]) establishes policies for protected tree species in Sonoma County. Projects shall be designed to minimize the destruction of protected trees. With development permits, a site plan shall be submitted that depicts the location of all protected trees greater than nine inches (9″) and their protected perimeters in areas that will be impacted by the proposed development, such as the building envelopes, access roads, and leachfields. Protected trees are defined (Chapter 26, Article 02, Sec. 26- 02-140) as the following species: big leaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*), black oak (*Quercus kelloggii*), blue oak (*Quercus douglasii*), coast live oak (Quercus *agrifolia*), interior live oak (*Quercus wislizenii*), madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*), oracle oak (*Quercus morehus*), Oregon oak (*Quercus garryana*), redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*), valley oak (*Quercus lobata*), California bay (*Umbellularia california*), and their hybrids. Lot line adjustments, zoning permits, and agricultural uses are exempt from this requirement.

Comment:
The proposed project would be required to adhere to all general provisions, tree protection methods during construction, and compensatory mitigation requirements of the Sonoma County Tree Protection Ordinance (Sonoma County Code of Ordinances, Chapter 26, Article 88, Sec. 26-88-010 [m]). As compensatory mitigation for the loss of protected trees, the applicant will be required to plant replacement trees and/or issue payment of in-lieu fees that may be used to acquire and protect stands of native trees in preserves or place trees on public lands.

Furthermore, only the minimum amount of vegetation would be pruned or removed that is necessary to construct the project. Where possible, vegetation would be tied back in lieu of cutting. Native vegetation that must be removed shall be cut at or above grade to facilitate re-growth. Any pruning that is done, including for utility line clearance, shall conform to the American National Standard for Tree Care Operation Tree, Shrub, and Other Woody Plant Maintenance Standard Practices, Pruning (ANSI A300 Part 1)-2008 Pruning), and the companion publication Best Management Practices: Tree pruning (ISA 2008). Roots shall only be unearthed when necessary.

Significance Level: Less Than Significant

f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state Habitat Conservation Plan?

Comment:
The project site is not located within the plan area of adopted Habitat Conservation Plans, Natural Community Conservation Plans, or other approved local, regional, or state Habitat Conservation Plan.

Significance Level: No Impact

5. CULTURAL RESOURCES:

Would the project:

a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?

Comment:
A Cultural Resources Evaluation was conducted for the project site (ARS, June 24, 2018). As part of and in addition to the evaluation, a record search was conducted at the Northwest Information Center (NWIC) of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS), the California Register of Historical Resources, the National Register of Historic Places (CRHR), the Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Department, as well as various online sources to develop a context in which to evaluate the prehistoric and historic significance of the property. The record search indicated that the property had not been previously evaluated for cultural resources and no cultural resources are currently recorded within the property.

The property currently contains an existing agricultural barn constructed circa 1975. There was previously a vineyard located near the agricultural barn; however, the vineyard has since died. The agricultural barn had been utilized as an unpermitted residential structure in the late 20th Century but was permitted in 2003 for its original use as a barn.

A surface reconnaissance was conducted to document and evaluate the barn (ca. 1975) and surrounding open areas, including the areas in which the proposed new building and new greenhouse would be constructed. The reconnaissance covered all locations where project improvements would occur and a buffer area nearby. The surface reconnaissance resulted in a negative finding, as Roop did not uncover any prehistoric, historic, or archaeological artifacts or features. In addition, the barn is not considered a historically significant structure.

Therefore, as no identified built environmental historical resources are located within the project area, project would have no impact on such a resource. Prehistoric and historic-period archaeological resources are evaluated in 5b below.

Significance Level: No Impact

b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?

Comment:
On January 19, 2018 and on March 15, 2018, Permit Sonoma staff referred the project application to Native American Tribes within Sonoma County to request consultation under AB-52. The first request for consolation period ended on February 18, 2019, and the second request for consultation period ended on April 14, 2018. The project was referred a second time because the project scope was amended. The Cloverdale Rancheria, Lytton Rancheria, and Stewarts Point Rancheria all gave “no

comment" responses to the project referrals. Permit Sonoma staff did not receive a response from Middleton Rancheria. No tribe responded with a request for formal consultation.

A Cultural Resources Evaluation was conducted for the project site (ARS, June 24, 2018). A record search and literature review were conducted at the Northwest Information Center (NWIC) of the California Historical Information System (CHRIS), as well as various online sources. A Sacred Sites inventory request was also made to the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) to determine if there are any Sacred Sites located within or near to the project area. The record search indicated the property had not been previously evaluated for cultural resources, including prehistoric resources. The Sacred Sites inventory conducted by the NAHC did not identify the presence of a Native American Sacred Site within the project area.

A surface reconnaissance was also conducted to inspect the project site for evidence of prehistoric artifacts and resources. The surface reconnaissance did not result in the discovery of any prehistoric or resources. The study concluded a negative finding in that the proposed project does not appear to pose any adverse effect to any recorded prehistoric or historic sites in the general vicinity of the project area.

All grading and building permit plans involving ground disturbing activities shall include the following notes that summarize the County's standard "accidental discovery" condition of approval, which shall be implemented in the event of an inadvertent discovery and reduce the potential impact to less than significant:

> *If paleontological resources or prehistoric, historic or tribal cultural resources are encountered during ground-disturbing work, all work in the immediate vicinity shall be halted and the operator must immediately notify the Permit and Resource Management Department (PRMD) – Project Review staff of the find. The operator shall be responsible for the cost to have a qualified paleontologist, archaeologist or tribal cultural resource specialist under contract to evaluate the find and make recommendations to protect the resource in a report to PRMD. Paleontological resources include fossils of animals, plants or other organisms. Prehistoric resources include humanly modified stone, shell, or bones, hearths, firepits, obsidian and chert flaked-stone tools (e.g., projectile points, knives, choppers), midden (culturally darkened soil containing heat-affected rock, artifacts, animal bone, or shellfish remains), stone milling equipment, such as mortars and pestles, and certain sites features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe. Historic resources include all by-products of human use greater than fifty (50) years of age including, backfilled privies, wells, and refuse pits; concrete, stone, or wood structural elements or foundations; and concentrations of metal, glass, and ceramic refuse.*
>
> *If human remains are encountered, work in the immediate vicinity shall be halted and the operator shall notify PRMD and the Sonoma County Coroner immediately. At the same time, the operator shall be responsible for the cost to have a qualified archaeologist under contract to evaluate the discovery. If the human remains are determined to be of Native American origin, the Coroner must notify the Native American Heritage Commission within 24 hours of this identification so that a Most Likely Descendant can be designated and the appropriate measures implemented in compliance with the California Government Code and Public Resources Code.*

Significance Level: Less than Significant

c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?

Comment:
No human remains are known to exist within the project area. However, there is potential for earthwork and grading to result in the disturbance of previously unrecorded human remains, if present.

Implementation of the County's standard "accidental discovery" condition of approval, which shall be

implemented in the event of an inadvertent discovery and reduce the potential impact to less than significant as discussed above in Section 5b.

Significance Level: Less than Significant

6. ENERGY

Would the project:

a) Result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?

Comment:
This analysis evaluates the use of energy resources (e.g., fuel and electricity) associated with construction activities, as well as operation and maintenance of the project. For construction, the analysis considers whether construction activities would use large amounts of fuels or energy, and whether they would be used in a wasteful manner. For energy used during operation and maintenance, the analysis identifies energy use that would occur with implementation of the project to determine whether large amounts would be used and whether they would be used in a wasteful manner.

Construction would require the use of fossil fuels (primarily gas, diesel, and motor oil) for excavation, grading, and vehicle travel. The precise amount of construction-related energy consumption is uncertain. However, construction would not require a large amount of fuel or energy usage because of the limited extent and nature of the proposed improvements and the minimal number of construction vehicles and equipment, worker trips, and truck trips that would be required for a project of this small scale (e.g., a 2,236 square foot building and 2,850 square foot greenhouse and parking constructed over a single 6-month construction season). Therefore, project construction would not encourage activities that would result in the use of large amounts of fuel and energy in a wasteful manner; the impact would be less than significant.

During the operational phase, energy would be consumed through daily use of the greenhouse lighting, heating, and cooling equipment. Project operation would require compliance with the following Operating Standard for commercial cannabis cultivation facilities contained in County Zoning Code Section 26-88-254(g)(3):

> *Energy Use. Electrical power for indoor cultivation, mixed light operations, and processing including but not limited to illumination, heating, cooling, and ventilation, shall be provided by any combination of the following: (i) on-grid power with one hundred percent (100%) renewable source; (ii) on-site zero net energy renewable source; or (iii) purchase of carbon offsets of any portion of power not from renewable sources. The use of generators for indoor and mixed light cultivation is prohibited, except for portable temporary use in emergencies only*.

The applicant has indicated that power for the operation will initially be purchased from a 100 percent renewable source (Sonoma Green Power / PG&E Green Power), with future plans to add onsite solar generation capacity.

During the operational phase, energy would also be consumed through daily worker trips to the facility, commercial truck trips associated with delivery of supplies and distribution. However, commute trips for a maximum of 6 employees and business deliveries would not be expected to result in the use of large amounts of fuel and energy in a wasteful manner; the impact would be less than significant.

While the long term operation of the project would result in an increase in energy consumption

compared to existing conditions, due to the small scale of the project and the renewable energy requirements, operation of the project would not use large amounts of energy and would not use it in a wasteful manner.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

Comment:
In 2003, the California Energy Commission (CEC), the California Power Authority, and the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) jointly adopted an Energy Action Plan (EAP) that listed goals for California's energy future and set forth a commitment to achieve these goals through specific actions (CEC 2003). In 2005, the CEC and CPUC approved the EAP II, which identified further actions to meet California's future energy needs, mainly focused on the energy and natural gas sectors (CEC 2005). Additionally, the CEC also prepared the State Alternative Fuels Plan in partnership with the California Air Resources Board and in consultation with the other state, federal, and local agencies. The alternative fuels plan presents strategies and actions California must take to increase the use of alternative non-petroleum fuels in a manner that minimizes costs to California and maximizes the economic benefits of in-state production (CEC 2007).

Construction and operation of the project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of either the EAP, EAP II, or the State Alternative Fuels Plan. Project construction would not require a large amount of fuel or energy usage because of the limited extent and nature of the proposed improvements and the minimal number of construction vehicles and equipment, worker trips, and truck trips that would be required for a project of this small scale. As described under item 6a, above, Project operation would require compliance with renewable energy requirements for commercial cannabis cultivation facilities contained in County Zoning Code Section 26-88-254(g)(3). No conflicts with a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency have been identified.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

7. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Would the project:

a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:

i. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.

Comment:
The project site is not within a fault hazard zone as defined by the Alquist-Priolo fault maps.

Significance Level: No Impact

ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?

Comment:
All of Sonoma County is subject to seismic shaking that would result from earthquakes along the San Andreas, Healdsburg-Rodgers Creek, and other faults. Predicting seismic events is not possible, nor is providing mitigation that can entirely reduce the potential for injury and

damage that could occur during a seismic event. However, by applying geotechnical evaluation techniques and appropriate engineering practices, potential injury and damage from seismic activity can be diminished, thereby exposing fewer people and less property to the effects of a major damaging earthquake. The design and construction of new structures are subject to engineering standards of the California Building Code (CBC), which consider soil properties, seismic shaking and foundation type. Standard conditions of approval require that building permits be obtained for all construction and that the project meet all standard seismic and soil test/compaction requirements. Therefore, the potential impact from strong seismic ground shaking would be less than significant.

Significance Level: Less than Significant

iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

Comment:
Strong ground shaking can result in liquefaction, the sudden loss of shear strength in saturated sandy material, resulting ground failure. Areas of Sonoma County most at risk of liquefaction are along San Pablo Bay and in alluvial valleys. According to the County Hazard Mitigation Plan Major Earthquake Fault Zones and Areas of Liquefaction Map (Sonoma County General Plan Figure 8.1), the project site is not located in a designated Liquefaction Hazard Area.

Significance Level: No Impact

iv. Landslides?

Comment:
Steep slopes characterize much of Sonoma County, particularly the northern and eastern portion of the County. Where these areas are underlain by weak or unconsolidated earth materials, landslides are a hazard. The project is in an area with steep slopes; site elevations ranging from 1,490 feet MSL along the northwestern parcel boundary to 1,280 feet MSL along the eastern parcel boundary. According to the County Hazard Mitigation Plan Landslide Hazard Areas Map (Sonoma County General Plan Figure 8.11), the project site is located in a designated Class IX Landslide Hazard Area.

Pursuant to General Plan Policy PS-1f, prior to project approval, the applicant shall provide the County with a geologic (geotechnical). An engineer's or a geologist's certification shall be provided to ensure that risks have been reduced to a level acceptable to the County.

b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

Comment:
The project includes grading, cuts, and fills, which require the issuance of a grading permit. Improper grading, both during and post-construction, has the potential to increase the volume of runoff from a site.

As discussed in Section 10 (Hydrology and Water Quality), erosion and sediment control provisions of the County Construction Grading and Drainage Ordinance (Zoning Code Chapter 11) and Storm Water Quality Ordinance (Zoning Code Chapter 11A) require submission of an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan and implementation of flow control best management practices to reduce runoff and require treatment of runoff from the two-year storm event. Required inspections by Permit Sonoma staff insure that all grading and erosion control measures are constructed according to the approved plans. These ordinance requirements and adopted best management practices are specifically designed to maintain potential water quantity impacts at a less than significant level during and post construction. Therefore, the potential soil erosion impact would be less than significant..

Significance Level: Less than Significant

c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?

Comment:
The project site is subject to seismic shaking and other geologic hazards as described in Section 7.a.ii, iv. Standard conditions of approval require that building permits be obtained for all construction and that the project meet all seismic and soil test/compaction requirements. This

Significance Level: Less than Significant

d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?

Comment:
Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code is an index of the relative expansive characteristics of soil as determined through laboratory testing. For the proposed project, soils at the site have not been tested for their expansive characteristics. According to the USDA National Resources Conservation Service, soils on the project site consist of GIE (78%) and GIF (22%) soils. GIE and GIF soils are Goulding cobbly clay loam, which are Hydrologic Group D soils. Group D soils typically have moderate to high shrink-swell potential and may be considered expansive soils. Project construction and grading activities must be conducted in compliance with the California Building Code and County Code Chapter 11 (Construction Grading and Drainage Ordinance). Compliance will all applicable construction and grading regulations would reduce impacts to life and property created from soil expansion to less than significant levels.

Significance Level: Less than Significant

e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?

Comment:
The project would be served by a new, private septic system. This septic system would be used for treatment of project domestic wastewater. Domestic wastewater would be generated through use of the toilet and sink facilities located in the existing barn.. The project site has not been tested to determine if it contains soils capable of supporting the use of septic tanks. The implementation of County standards for permitting of on-site wastewater disposal and would result in a less than significant impact related to wastewater disposal.

Significance Level: Less than Significant

f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

Comment:
Paleontological resources include fossil remains, as well as fossil localities and rock or soil formations that have produced fossil material. No surveys for paleontological resources have been conducted for the site. The standard condition of approval for accidental discovery as discussed in Section 5-b would reduce the impact of construction activities on unknown paleontological resources to a less than significant level by addressing discovery of unanticipated buried resources.

Significance Level: Less than Significant

8. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS:

Would the project:

a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

Comment:
The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) has adopted a significance threshold of 1,100 metric tons of C02e per year or compliance with a qualified GHG Reduction Strategy for operational impacts for land use projects. Emissions are caused by natural gas combustion, electricity use, on-road vehicles, water use, wine fermentation, carbon sequestration, and existing emissions. The BAAQMD does not include a threshold of significance for construction-related GHG emissions.

The project's potential operational greenhouse gas emissions was estimated using the CalEEMod v. 2016.3.2 emissions model. Project-specific trip generation and application of the County's renewable energy requirements (County of Sonoma's Cannabis Ordinance 26-88-254 (g)(3)) were applied in the model. Modeling indicates that project operation would generate approximately 80 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO2e) emissions per year, which is less than the BAAQMD's adopted greenhouse gas threshold of 1,100 MTCO2e per year. Additionally, the project would be required to comply with the following operating standard for commercial cannabis cultivation facilities contained in County Zoning Code Section 26-88-254(g)(3), which would further reduce operational GHG emissions:

> *Electrical power for indoor cultivation, mixed light operations, and processing including but not limited to illumination, heating, cooling, and ventilation, shall be provided by any combination of the following: (i) on-grid power with one hundred percent (100%) renewable source; (ii) on-site zero net energy renewable source; or (iii) purchase of carbon offsets of any portion of power not from renewable sources. The use of generators for indoor and mixed light cultivation is prohibited, except for portable temporary use in emergencies only.*

Project construction activities would result in a temporary source of additional greenhouse gas emissions (estimated to be less than 10 MTCO2e), primarily in the form of carbon dioxide from exhaust emissions associated with haul trucks, construction worker commute vehicles, and construction equipment. No applicable standard or significance threshold has been established pertaining to construction-related greenhouse gas emissions. The BAAQMD CEQA Air Quality Guidelines do not include screening criteria for construction-related greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore, this review uses a qualitative approach to construction emissions in accordance with Section 15064.4(a)(2) of the CEQA Guidelines. The project would not involve construction activities associated with higher-level greenhouse gas emissions such as use of a significant amount of heavy construction equipment, substantial earth-moving activities, or import/export of a significant amount of material. The addition of construction-related greenhouse gas emissions to the annualized operational emissions would remain substantially below the BAAQMD operational threshold.

Significance Level: Less than Significant

b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

Comment:
This analysis uses the California Air Resources Board (CARB) 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan as the applicable greenhouse gas reduction strategy (CARB 2017). The Sonoma County Regional Climate Protection Authority's Climate Action Plan (RCPA 2016), adopted in July 2016, is not used as a qualified greenhouse gas reduction strategy for CEQA purposes due to a court settlement.

The 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan provides strategies for meeting the mid-term 2030

greenhouse gas reduction target set by Senate Bill (SB) 32. The 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan also identifies how the State can substantially advance toward the 2050 greenhouse gas reduction target of Executive Order S-3-05, which consists of reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels. The recommendations cover the key sectors, including: energy and industry; transportation; natural and working lands; waste management; and water. The recommended measures in the 2017 Scoping Plan are broad policy and regulatory initiatives that will be implemented at the State level and do not relate to the construction and operation of individual projects. Although project construction and operation may be affected by some of the State level regulations and policies that will be implemented, the project would not impede the State developing or implementing the greenhouse gas reduction measures identified in the Scoping Plan. Therefore, the project would not conflict with AB 32 or the 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan.

The County's Climate Change Action Resolution (May 8, 2018) resolved to reduce GHG emissions by 40% below 1990 levels by 2030 and 80% below 1990 levels by 2050 and noted twenty strategies for reducing GHG emissions, including increasing carbon sequestration, increasing renewable energy use, and reducing emissions from the consumption of good and services. As noted above, the project would be required to comply with several renewable energy requirements for commercial cannabis cultivation facilities contained in County Zoning Code Section 26-88-254(g)(3). By incorporating required renewable energy requirements, the project would not conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs.

Significance Level: No Impact

9. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Would the project:

a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

Comment:
Construction of the project may involve the intermittent transport, storage, use and disposal of potentially hazardous materials, including fuels and lubricants, paints, solvents, and other materials commonly used in construction. During construction activities, any on-site hazardous materials that may be used, stored, or transported would be required to follow standard protocols (as determined by the U.S. EPA, California Department of Health and Safety, and Sonoma County) for maintaining health and safety. Improper transit, storage, or handling of these materials could result in spills. This potential impact would be reduced to a less than significant level with implementation of standard project conditions of approval.

In addition, plant nutrients, fertilizers, and approved pesticides would be used during the cultivation operation. Plant nutrients, fertilizers, pesticides, and other project chemicals would be stored off the ground without exposure to weather, sunlight, or wind in an enclosed storage area within the existing 2,800 square foot agricultural barn. All cultivation activities would take place within fully enclosed structures (the barn, new building, and new greenhouse), limiting the probability that nutrients, fertilizers, and pesticides would contaminate the surrounding environment. Plants within the indoor buildings would be hand watered, and plants in the greenhouse would be watered using a drip irrigation system. Plant nutrients, fertilizers, and pesticides would be applied directly to plants. All flower beds are lined with plastic and have no drains, limiting the potential for chemically contaminated liquids to be discharged from the flower beds. It is anticipated all water and materials (such as nutrients and pesticides) would be entirely absorbed into the beds and used by the plants.

Generally, there is no disposal of agricultural chemicals because they are applied to and used by the cannabis plants. Any disposal of unused plant chemicals would be minor, and the material would be taken to an appropriate solid waste disposal location as identified in product disposal instructions. No

impacts are anticipated related to the routine transport, use, or disposal of small amounts of agricultural chemicals.

Additionally, as a condition of approval, the project would be required to comply with the following operating standard for commercial cannabis cultivation facilities contained in County Zoning Code Section 26-88-254(g)(4):

> *All cultivation operations that utilize hazardous materials shall comply with applicable hazardous waste generator, underground storage tank, above ground storage tanks, and any AB 185 (hazardous materials handling) requirements and maintain any applicable permits for these programs from the Fire Prevention Division, Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) of Sonoma County Fire and Emergency Services Department, or the Agricultural Commissioner (Sec 26-88-254(g)(4)).*

Therefore, the potential environmental impact associated with the routine, transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials would be less than significant.

Significance Level: Less than Significant

b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

Comment:
Small amounts of hazardous materials would be used during construction and operation of the project (see Item 9.a above). Proper use of materials in accordance with local, State, and federal requirements, and as required in the construction documents, would minimize the potential for accidental releases or emissions from hazardous materials. Caltrans and the California Highway Patrol regulate the transportation of hazardous materials and wastes, including container types and packaging requirements, as well as licensing and training for truck operators, chemical handlers, and hazardous waste haulers. The California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal-OSHA) enforces hazard communication program regulations which contain worker safety training and hazard information requirements, such as procedures for identifying and labeling hazardous substances, communicating hazard information related to hazardous substances and their handling, and preparation of health and safety plans to protect workers and employees.

Storage, handling, and transportation of propane and other liquefied petroleum fuels are regulated by both the State of California Fire Code and Cal-OSHA. Businesses that utilize hazardous materials in California are required to develop and implement a Hazardous Materials Business Plan, which includes information on the location, type, quantity, and health risks of hazardous materials as well as employee training and emergency response plans designed to manage the potential hazards associated to storage, handling, and transportation of facility-specific hazardous materials.

Because the applicant and its contractors would be required to comply with existing and future hazardous materials laws and regulations addressing the transport, storage, use, and disposal of hazardous materials, the potential to create a significant hazard from accidental conditions would be less than significant.

Significance Level: Less than Significant

c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

Comment:
The project would not be located within 0.25 miles of an existing or proposed school. The nearest school, the Sonoma County Office of Education ATC & MTU, is approximately 3.3 miles south of the

project site.

Significance Level: No Impact

d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

Comment:
The provisions in Government Code Section 65962.5 are commonly referred to as the Cortese List. A search of the Cortese List was completed to determine if any known hazardous waste sites have been recorded on or adjacent to the project site (CalEPA 2019). The project site was not identified on, or in the vicinity of, any parcels on lists compiled by the California Environmental Protection Agency, Regional Water Quality Control Board, California Department of Toxic Substances Control, or the CalRecycle Waste Management Board Solid Development Waste Information System.

Significance Level: No Impact

e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?

Comment:
The project would not be located within policy area of an airport land use plan nor is it located within two miles of a public airport or public use airport. The airport closest to the project site is Graywood Ranch Airport, a private airport located approximately 3.6 miles to the south.

Significance Level: No Impact

f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

Comment:
The project would not impair implementation of, or physically interfere with, the County's adopted emergency operations plan. There is no separate emergency evacuation plan for the County. The project would not change existing circulation patterns, would not generate substantial new traffic, and therefore, would have no effect on emergency response routes. Refer to Section 17. Transportation for a discussion of project traffic.

Significance Level: No Impact

g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?

Comment:
According to the Wildland Fire Hazard Area Map (Figure PS-1g) of the Sonoma County General Plan, the project site is located in the State Responsibility Area and is designated as a High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. According to the Sonoma County Hazard Mitigation Plan (p. WH-3), a combination of highly flammable fuel, long dry summers, and steep slopes creates a significant natural hazard of large wildland fires in many areas of Sonoma County. As noted in the General Plan Public Safety Element (p. PS-14), *The High Fire Hazard Severity Zone includes: a) wildland areas supporting medium to high fire behavior and roughly average burn probabilities; and b) developed/urbanized areas with more limited non-burnable surfaces and moderate vegetation cover*.

Projects located in High and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones are required by State and County Code to have a detailed vegetation management plan developed and reviewed by the Sonoma County Fire Prevention Division before a building permit can be issued.

All construction projects must comply with County Fire Safety Ordinance (County Code Chapter 13), including but not limited to, installing fire sprinklers in buildings, providing emergency vehicle access, and maintaining a dedicated fire-fighting water supply on-site and defensible space. The proposed project would be required to comply with all Fire Safe Standards.

Please see Section 20.Wildfire of this initial study for an expanded discussion on wildfire.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

10. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Would the project:

a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?

Comment:
The project would result in grading for two new structures, including a new indoor cultivation building and a new greenhouse, an improved private roady, an improved parking area, new walkways, and associated hardscape and landscaping. There would be approximately 6870 sq. ft. (0.16 acres) of new soil disturbance and approximately 6,386 square feet of new impervious surface. Existing project impervious surface area is approximately 2,800 square feet. Construction activities, completed improvements, and project operations could affect the quantity and/or quality of stormwater runoff.

There are no streams, drainage channels, or wetland features on or adjacent to the project site. The nearest waterway identified is Santa Rosa Creek, which is located approximately 1,900 feet to the east and downhill of the project site. This portion of Santa Rosa Creek is located at the meeting point of the Hood Mountain Regional Park & Open Space Preserve and the Sugarloaf Ridge State Park. Though Santa Rosa Creek is located downhill and in the vicinity of the project site, the abundant vegetative cover, including cismontane woodland and foothill grasses, and physical space located in between the project site and the creek would conceivably prevent project discharge from entering Santa Rosa Creek. All project cannabis cultivation activities would be contained indoors.

The project would not produce any cultivation wastewater discharge, as discussed above in Section 9.a of this initial study, as all cannabis plants would be grown in flower beds lined with plastic and hand watered or irrigated with a drip irrigation system. It is anticipated all water and materials (such as nutrients and pesticides) would be entirely absorbed into the beds and used by the plants. Wastewater produced by the project includes “mop water” produced during routine cleaning of indoor and greenhouse areas and water produced from use of sinks and toilets. Mop water would be stored and then trucked off-site per State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) standards. Domestic wastewater would enter the redesigned septic tank via a plumbing system.

Project design and applicable regulations, summarized below, would ensure potential discharge from the project would not degrade surface or groundwater quality.

On February 5, 2019, the State Water Resources Control Board adopted the amended Cannabis Cultivation Policy (Cannabis Policy) and the Statewide Cannabis General Order WQ 2019-0001-DWQ (Cannabis General Order) for General Waste Discharge Requirements and Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges of Waste Associated with Cannabis Cultivation Activities. General Order WQ 2019-0001-DWQ became effective as of April 16, 2019. The Cannabis Policy and Cannabis General Order include requirements to reduce impacts of waste discharges and surface water diversions associated with cannabis cultivation. The Order requires submittal of a Site Management Plan describing BMPs to protect water quality, and may also require a Site Erosion and

Sediment Control Plan and/or a Disturbed Area Stabilization Plan depending on size and site characteristics of the operation. Most commercial indoor cannabis cultivation operations are conditionally exempt, but must enroll in the program to obtain documentation of their conditionally exempt status. Compliance with the Cannabis General Order is a standard condition of approval for all cannabis permits.

The Sonoma County Department of Agriculture/ Weights & Measures has prescribed cannabis cultivation Best Management Practices related to pesticide and fertilizer storage, pesticide use, fertilizer use, riparian protection, water use and storage, waste management, erosion control/grading and drainage, and items related to indoor cultivation.

Sonoma County also requires the project applicant to prepare a grading and drainage plan (Erosion Prevention and Sediment Control Plan) in conformance with Chapter 11 (Construction Grading and Drainage Ordinance) and Chapter 11A (Storm Water Quality Ordinance) of the Sonoma County Code and the Sonoma County Storm Water Low Impact Development Guide, all of which include performance standards and Best Management Practices for pre-construction, construction, and post-construction to prevent and/or minimize the discharge of pollutants, including sediment, from the project site. Required inspections by Permit Sonoma staff insure that all grading and erosion control measures are constructed according to the approved plans.

All of the above ordinance requirements and adopted best management practices are specifically designed to maintain potential water quality impacts at a less than significant level during and post construction.

Significance Level: Less than Significant

b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

Comment:
The project site is not located within a Medium or High Priority groundwater basin as defined under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). The nearest SGMA priority basin is the Santa Rosa Plain Basin located approximately 5.5 miles to the southwest. The project is in a Groundwater Availability Class 4 – Low or Highly Variable Water Yield Area. Because the project would be located in a water scarce area (Class 4), a groundwater report is required by County General Plan Policy WR-2e and County Zoning Code (Section 26-88-254(g)(10)). O'Connor Environmental, Inc. prepared a project Groundwater Report to address potential groundwater impacts under CEQA (O'Connor Environmental, Inc. May 1, 2018). Project water supply would be generated by the two existing, private water wells on the property. One existing 5,000-gallon water tank near the existing barn would hold water for both irrigation and fire suppression.

The groundwater report analyzed the applicant's estimates of existing and proposed water use within the project recharge area, the well completion reports from the area, the characterization of local hydrogeologic conditions, estimates of annual groundwater recharge and proposed groundwater use, and the potential for well interference between the project well and neighboring wells to comprehensively assess the project's potential impacts on groundwater supplies.

Greenhouse and Indoor Cultivation Water Use
The existing indoor cultivation operation consists of 376 cannabis plants irrigated at a rate of 0.24 gallons of water per plant per day. Each 500 square foot section of the 1,536 square foot cultivation area receives 200 gallons of water per week. Thus, existing weekly cultivation water use is 625 gallons/week, or 0.10 acre-feet/year.

With the addition of the proposed indoor cultivation area within the new building, total project indoor cultivation area would increase to 3,799 square feet and the number of indoor cannabis plants would

increase to 2,360. Indoor irrigation rates would remain the same, meaning total proposed indoor cultivation water use would increase to 0.24 acre-feet/year (1,520 gal/week).

The new greenhouse is expected to support 1,800 cannabis plants within 2,850 square feet of cultivation area. The greenhouse plants would be watered bi-weekly in groups of 16. Each group of 16 plants would receive 0.18 gallons of water per day every other week. Because planting density in the greenhouse would be high, estimated water use for greenhouse cultivation would be 0.43 acre-feet/year (2,680 gal/year).

Therefore, the project groundwater report states the total proposed water use for the 6,649 square feet of cultivation area, including both the indoor and greenhouse areas, would be approximately 0.67 acre-feet/year (224,837 gal/year).

Total On-Site Water Use
The existing cultivation operation is run by the two owner/operators. The owner/operators would continue to be the only full-time, year-round project "employees." The owner/operators' existing domestic water use is 30 gal/day (15 gal/day per owner/operator) for 260 workdays per year. Existing domestic water use is approximately 0.02 acre-feet (7,800 gallons) per year.

For 12 (twelve) days each year, the owners would employ four (4) independent contractors to work on-site and process the harvested cannabis. The project site would have one toilet and two sinks for employee use. The project groundwater report states that because the project would employ such a small number of people, four (4) of which would work on property 12 (twelve) days per year, non-cultivation water use would be minimal. The groundwater report estimates proposed employee domestic water use would remain 0.02 acre-feet/year, as contractor use of toilet and sink facilities during the course of twelve (12) days would not generate a substantial increase in water use compared to existing conditions.

Total proposed water use for the project is estimated to be 0.69 acre-feet/year (224,837 gal/year).

Water Use Impact Analysis
The project aquifer recharge area is estimated to be approximately 12.6 acres in size and is located mostly within the boundaries of the project parcel. Mean annual groundwater recharge for the project aquifer recharge area is estimated to be 10.0 acre-feet per year. Considering the total proposed groundwater use of the project is estimated to be 0.69 acre-feet per year, the project would use the equivalent of 7.0% of the mean annual groundwater recharge. The groundwater report indicates there is a substantial surplus of groundwater resources available for project use. On its own, project water use would not likely result in significant reductions in groundwater resources over time.

The groundwater report analyzed available well completion reports for four additional wells located in the vicinity of the project recharge area. All surrounding wells are located outside the project recharge area; therefore, the report determined that increased well pumping for the project would likely not result in negative impacts at any of the surrounding wells on neighboring parcels.

The County requires several standard conditions of approval related to water use which would apply to this project. These include required submission of a Water Conservation Plan for all new and repurposed buildings, review of the landscaping plan to ensure compliance with Water Efficient Landscape Regulations (County Code Chapter 7D3), and installation of a groundwater level monitoring device pursuant to General Plan Policy WR-2d, including installation of a water meter(s) on the water system and quarterly groundwater extraction reports. Additional project-specific conditions required by the County Natural Resources Geologist include the provision of a rainwater capture system with a storage capacity of 10,000 gallons of water and a condensate capture system that would collect water from project air conditioners and dehumidifiers and route that water into irrigation supply storage tanks. These conditions have been incorporated to provide a supplementary project water source aside from groundwater and thus ensure project water use would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies of the basin. In addition, in the event actual project groundwater use exceeds 0.7 acre-feet per year, project groundwater use would be subject to

additional County review.

The results of the groundwater report combined with additional County review and oversight required through standard conditions of approval would ensure the project does not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level.

Significance Level: Less than Significant

c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which

i. would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?

Comment:
There are no streams, drainage channels, or wetland features on the project site. Site drainage occurs by overland flow to the east; the parcel is slopes strongly in that direction. Elevations range from 1,490 feet Mean Sea Level (MSL)along the northwestern parcel boundary to 1,280 feet MSL along the eastern parcel boundary. Existing site elevations and topography would remain largely unchanged after project construction, and overall drainage patterns would essentially remain the same.

Grading would occur in the northwestern portion of the parcel directly adjacent to the existing barn. Project build-out would require a grading permit, which requires all new runoff from new impervious surfaces be contained and treated on-site. Overall drainage patterns would not change; therefore, the project would not result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site and the post-construction operational soil erosion impact would be less than significant.

Though limited to a small portion of the site, construction of the project would involve cuts, fills, and other grading. Unregulated grading during construction has the potential to increase soil erosion. Construction grading activities would be subject to a grading permit, which requires installation of adequate stormwater treatment measures, such as silt fencing, straw wattles, and soils discharge controls at construction site entrance(s), to prevent soil erosion during construction. County grading regulations aim to ensure all project runoff is captured and treated onsite. Compliance with these regulations would thereby reduce the potential for soil erosion and sediment delivery from the site, as described in 10.a above.

Significance Level: Less than Significant

ii. substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;

Comment:
There are no streams, drainage channels, or wetland features on the project site. The project parcel is not in a 100-year floodplain or in an area prone to flooding (see 10.iv below). Site drainage occurs by overland flow to the east; the parcel is slopes strongly in that direction. Elevation ranges from 1,490 feet MSL at the northwestern boundary of the parcel to 1,280 feet MSL near the eastern boundary of the parcel. Existing site elevations and topography would remain largely unchanged after project construction, and overall drainage patterns would essentially remain the same. New development would occur in a small area (0.001% of the 15-acre parcel) in the northwestern portion of the parcel.

The project includes a proposal to collect and store rainwater from impervious surfaces

on-site, though no details for the design, capacity, or timing of build-out of this system are given. Sloped areas surrounding of the project building envelope would be seeded with a County-approved native grass seed mic to stabilize slopes and prevent runoff of stormwater and sediment from entering adjacent woodland habitat located downhill. The project involves the construction of a new cultivation building, a new greenhouse, an improved (paved) parking area, improved (paved) walkways, and associated hardscape totaling approximately 6,386 square feet of new impervious area. The existing access road (McCormick Road) and turnaround area adjacent to the proposed parking area would be improved, which most likely would not include paving, to meet County requirements.

Project build-out would begin upon approval of a grading permit, which would require all runoff from new impervious surfaces be contained and treated on-site. Considering overall drainage patterns would not change and runoff containment features (new native vegetation) would be planted to absorb runoff, the project would not substantially increase the amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on or off-site.

Significance Level: Less than Significant

iii. create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or

Comment:
On-site construction would create new impervious surface and generate stormwater runoff. Vegetation would be planted to manage stormwater runoff and retain all stormwater on-site. Permit Sonoma Grading and Stormwater Section staff reviewed the project referral and provided conditions of approval to ensure project compliance with the County Construction Grading and Drainage Ordinance (Zoning Code Chapter 11) and the Storm Water Quality Ordinance (Zoning Code Chapter 11A). The project would require a grading permit, which would not be issued until all recommended feasible stormwater treatment options have been incorporated into project design in compliance with all applicable standards of the County Code. Impacts would be less than significant with incorporation of ordinance requirements.

Significance Level: Less than Significant

iv. impede or redirect flood flows?

Comment:
The project site is not located in a 100-year floodplain or other Special Flood Hazard Area mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The project site is in an “Area of Minimal Flood Hazard” according to FEMA.

Significance Level: No Impact

d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?

Comment:
The project site is not located within a 100-year flood hazard area (FEMA 2008) or in an area that would be subject to flooding as a result of a levee or dam failure (Sonoma County General Plan Figure PS-1f). The project site is not located near a large isolated body of water that may be affected by a seiche, or within an area mapped as being at risk to tsunamis.

Significance Level: No Impact

e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

Comment:
The project site is not located within a Medium or High Priority groundwater basin as defined under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). The nearest SGMA basin is the Santa Rosa Plain Basin located approximately 5.5 miles to the southwest. Though the project would not be subject to a sustainable groundwater management plan, compliance with County requirements discussed in 10.b above would ensure the project does not deplete groundwater supply or use groundwater in an unsustainable manner.

As described under item 10.a and 10.c, the project would be required to comply with ordinance requirements, permits, and adopted BMPs that are specifically designed to maintain potential water quality impacts at a less than significant level during and post-construction. No conflicts with a water quality control plan have been identified.

Significance Level: Less than Significant

11. LAND USE PLANNING

Would the project:

a) Physically divide an established community?

Comment:
The project would not physically divide a community. It does not involve construction of a physical structure (such as a major transportation facility) or removal of a primary access route (such as a road or bridge) that would impair mobility within an established community of between a community and outlying areas. No impact would occur.

Significance Level: No Impact

b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

Comment:
The General Plan Land Use Designation on the parcel is Resources and Rural Development. The proposed project would be generally consistent with the goals, policies, and objectives in the Sonoma county General Plan 2020 related to avoiding or mitigating any environmental effects, including:

- Preservation of biotic and scenic resources (General Plan Goal LU-10, Objective LU-10.1, Goal OSRC-2, Objective OSRC-2.1, Objective OSRC-2.2, Objective OSRC-2.3, Policy OSRC-2d, Goal OSCR-3, Policy OSRC-3a, Policy OSRC-3b, Policy OSRC-3c, Goal OSRC-6, Objective OSRC-6.1, and Policy OSRC-6a): The project would be consistent with regulations pertaining to avoiding biotic resources and would also be consistent with regulations designed to maintain the scenic qualities of the area. (See section 1, Aesthetics, for further discussion.)

- Night time lights and preservation of night time skies and visual character (General Plan Goal OSRC-4, Objective OSRC-4.1, Objective OSRC-4.2, Policy OSRC-4a, Policy OSRC-4b, and Policy OSRC-4c). The project would use minimal exterior lights which would comply with County requirements related to location, shielding, and light levels.

- Renewable energy (General Plan Policy LU-11b, Goal OSRC-14, and Objective OSRC-14.2): The project would use 100 percent renewable energy, consistent with County goals of increasing energy conservation and improving efficiency.

- Wastewater (General Plan Policy LU-8a): The project would comply with regional waste discharge requirements and County regulations to minimize storm water, surface water and groundwater pollution.

- Noise (General Plan Goal NE-1): Project operations, including cannabis cultivation and processing, would not exceed the general plan noise standards Table NE-2. (See section 12, Noise, for further discussion).

The project site is also located within the Franz Valley Area Plan, which establishes an area to implement the General Plan, particularly General Plan Policy LU-1a. It is noted in the Area Plan that the majority of the land use area within the plan is designated Resources and Rural Development and that the primary goal for this land use it to keep options open for resource development and conservation by not permitting residential or other types of development that would preclude potential future land uses (Franz Valley Area Plan, Pgs. 15-16). The Area Plan includes broad goals and policies related to Open Space preservation.

- The project would not create any new residences, would not be developed on a ridgeline (Franz Valley Area Plan, Pg. 27; Policy (4)), and is not in the vicinity of a vista point (Policy 2).

- Minimum setbacks would be consistent with Sec. 26-88-254 (Cannabis cultivation—Commercial medical): *"a minimum of one hundred feet (100') from property lines and a minimum of three hundred feet (300') from occupied residences and businesses on surrounding properties." The proposed cultivation area would be setback approximately 790', which is under the ordinance standard 1000', from the property line shared with Hood Mountain Regional Park and Open Space Preserve. Therefore, the project would require an exception from the 1000' minimum setback distance outlined in the Cannabis Ordinance. The Cannabis Ordinance does allow flexibility in park setbacks under certain conditions; Per Section 26-88-254(f)(6) of the Cannabis Ordinance No. 6245: "This park setback may be reduced with a use permit when it is determined that an actual physical equivalent separation exists due to topography, vegetation or slope, that no offsite impacts will occur, and that the cannabis operation is not accessible or visible from the park." Planning staff does support exception request from the 1000' park setback due to the property's topography, slope, vegetation and visibility characteristics would provide significant physical equivalent setback to restrict, limit or eliminate access from the property to and from the neighboring Hood Mountain Regional Park.*

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

12. MINERAL RESOURCES:

Would the project:

a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?

Comment:
The Sonoma County Aggregate Resources Management Plan (Sonoma County 2010) identifies aggregate resources of statewide or regional significance (areas classified as MRZ-2 by the State Geologist). The project site is not located within a designated mineral resource deposit area (Sonoma

County 2010), or within an area classified as MRZ-2 in the California Geologic Survey Special Report 205 (CGS 2013).

Significance Level: No Impact

b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?

Comment:
The project site is not zoned MR (Mineral Resources), and is not located within a locally-important mineral resource recovery site. No locally-important mineral resources are known to occur at the site.

Significance Level: No Impact

13. NOISE

Would the project:

a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

Project Construction Noise
Comment:
The County's General Plan and Zoning code do not establish construction-related noise standards. Therefore, construction activities would not generate noise levels in excess of applicable standards. However, the project would result in a temporary increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity during construction. Noise impacts resulting from construction depend upon the noise generated by various pieces of construction equipment, the timing and duration of noise-generating activities, and the distance between construction noise sources and noise-sensitive areas. Construction noise impacts primarily result when construction activities occur during noise-sensitive times of the day (e.g., early morning, evening, or nighttime hours), the construction occurs in areas immediately adjoining noise-sensitive land uses, or when construction lasts over extended periods of time. The project is not anticipated to require nighttime construction activity. However, the project would temporarily increase noise levels during construction in the project area, including residences located adjacent to Raven Road, over an approximately six-month period. Implementation of Mitigation Measure NOISE-1 would reduce the noise impact from construction activities and hauling to a less than significant level.

Significance Level: Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Mitigation:
Mitigation Measure NOISE-1 Reduce Construction Noise Levels: The applicant and its contractor shall adhere to the following construction best management practices to reduce construction noise levels emanating from construction activities and minimize disruption and annoyance at existing noise-sensitive receptors in the project vicinity.

a) A Construction Coordinator shall be designated by the project applicant, and a sign shall be posted on the site stating the allowable hours of construction, and including the Coordinator's 24-hour phone number for public contact regarding noise issues. The Coordinator shall investigate all complaints to determine the cause (such as starting too early, faulty muffler, etc.), and shall take prompt action to correct any problem. The Coordinator shall report all complaints and their resolutions to Permit Sonoma staff.

b) All internal combustion engines used during construction shall be operated with mufflers that meet the requirements of the State Resources Code, and, where applicable, the Vehicle Code. Equipment shall be properly maintained and turned off when not in use.
c) Except for actions taken to prevent an emergency or to deal with an existing emergency, all construction activities (including equipment start-up, operation, servicing, and deliveries) shall be restricted to the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. on weekdays and 9:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. on Saturdays. No construction shall occur on Sundays or holidays. If work outside the times specified above becomes necessary, the applicant shall notify the Permit Sonoma staff as soon as practical.
d) Construction maintenance, storage and staging areas for construction equipment shall avoid proximity to residential areas to the maximum extent practicable. Stationary construction equipment, such as compressors, mixers, etc., shall be placed away from residential areas and/or provided with acoustical shielding. Quiet construction equipment shall be used when possible.

Mitigation Monitoring:
Mitigation Monitoring NOISE-1 Reduce Construction Noise Levels: Prior to issuance of grading or building permits, Permit Sonoma staff shall verify that the NOISE-1 measures are included on all site alteration, grading, building or improvement plans. The applicant shall submit documentation to Permit Sonoma staff that a Construction Coordinator has been designated and that appropriate signage has been posted including the Coordinator's phone number. Documentation may include photographic evidence or a site inspection, at the discretion of Permit Sonoma staff. Any noise complaints not immediately resolved by the Coordinator shall be investigated by Permit Sonoma staff. If violations are found, a noise consultant may be required at the applicant's expense to evaluate the problem and recommend corrective actions. Continuing or unresolved noise violations may result in an enforcement action and/or revocation or modification proceedings, as appropriate.

Project Operational Noise:
Comment:
County noise standards (as indicated in Table NE-2 of the General Plan) establishes the maximum allowable exterior noise exposures of 50 dBA in the daytime (7:00 AM to 10:00 PM) and 45 dBA in the nighttime (10:00 PM to 7:00 AM). As measured using the L50 value (the value exceeded 50 percent of the time, or 30 minutes in any hour –I.e., this is the median noise level).

Table NE-2 Maximum Allowable Exterior Noise Exposures for Non-transportation Noise Sources

Maximum Allowable Exterior Noise Exposures for Non-transportation Noise Sources(A)		
Hourly Noise Metric, dBA(B)	**Daytime (7 AM to 10 PM)**	**Nighttime (10 PM to 7 AM)**
L50 (30 minutes in any hour)	50	45
L25 (15 minutes in any hour)	55	50
L08 (4 minutes 48 seconds in any hour)	60	55
L02 (72 seconds in any hour)	65	60

Source: Sonoma County General Plan Noise Element Table NE-2
(A) Pursuant to General Plan Policy NE-1C, the noise standards apply at the exterior property line of any adjacent noise sensitive land use.
(B) The sound level exceeded n% of the time in any hour. For example, L50 is the value exceeded 50% of the time or 30 minutes in any hour; this is the median noise level.

The project would include noise sources such as minor construction equipment to build the structures, carbon filter fans in the indoor structures and circulation fans in the proposed greenhouse. This equipment would be small scale in nature (due to the limited building square footages associated with the project) and would primarily operate during the daytime (9:00 AM-2:00 PM). In addition, noise generating equipment would be setback a minimum of 100 feet from adjacent property lines. With this

setback, each individual piece of stationary equipment could have a sound power of approximately 57 dBA and not exceed the County's nighttime L50 standards listed in the table above. This calculation presumes the area between the equipment and property line consists of hard ground cover (e.g., asphalt, compacted soil) and not topographic, vegetative, or structural shielding, a conservative assumption (i.e., likely to overestimate the lowest sound power level that would exceed County standards). The potential for the project to generate noise levels to exceed the County's standards is limited to large exhaust fans, short-term construction equipment for the proposed structures and mobile equipment for operations. The project does not include a power generator. Due to the low trip generation associated with the project (4 ADT), road noise from related use would also be minimal. Based on review of project plans and distance information obtained via Google Earth, the cultivation operation would be located at least 1,500 feet from off-site residence. These setbacks ensure that any noise associated with the cultivation operation would not expose persons to noise levels in excess of standards.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

b) Generation of excessive ground borne vibration or ground borne noise levels?

Comment:
The proposed project may generate minor ground borne vibration and noise from conventional construction and farming equipment, but no intensive vibratory noise would occur, such as pile-driving or jackhammering. All construction noise would be short-term, temporary and limited to daytime hours. Ground borne noise would be short-term and temporary, and would be limited to daytime hours. The impact would be less than significant. There are no other activities or uses associated with the project that would expose persons to or generate excessive ground borne vibration or ground borne noise levels.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

Comment:
The project site is not within the Airport Referral Area as designated by the Sonoma County Comprehensive Airport Land Use Plan.

Significance Level: No Impact

14. POPULATION AND HOUSING

Would the project:

a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?

Comment:
The proposed project does not involve the construction of new housing. The project would create a modest demand for new employees (approximately 6 new full time employment opportunities). The increase in employment opportunities is not anticipated to result in an indirect increase in population, as it is anticipated that the employees would be existing residents of Sonoma County. Therefore, the project is not anticipated to induce substantial population growth. No new infrastructure is proposed. Therefore, the project would not induce substantial population growth.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

Comment:
No housing will be displaced by the project and no replacement housing would be required.

Significance Level: No Impact

15. PUBLIC SERVICES

Would the project:

a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

Comment:
The proposed project does not involve the construction of new housing. The project would create a modest demand for new employees (approximately 6 new full time employment opportunities). The increase in employment opportunities is not anticipated to result in an indirect increase in population, as it is anticipated that the employees would be existing residents of Sonoma County. Therefore, the proposed project would not require construction of new or physically altered governmental facilities. No impact would occur.

Significance Level: No Impact

i. Fire protection?

Comment:
A site visit was performed on April 15, 2019 and again in November 2020 by Sonoma County Fire Department by a Senior Fire Inspector. The inspection report did not require the applicant to make improvements to the site, but rather continue maintenance of access and facilities.

Sonoma County Code requires that all new development meet Sonoma County Code Chapter 13 (Fire Code) and the Board of Forestry's fire safe standards regulations set forth in 14 California Code of Regulations §1270- 1276 (Fire Safe Standards). The County Fire Marshal reviewed the project description and plans on March 20, 2018 and again on November 19, 2020. Project conditions of approval imposed by the County Fire Division requires that the project comply with the Fire Code and the Fire Safe Standards, including fire protection methods such as sprinklers in buildings, alarm systems, extinguishers, vegetation management, emergency water supply, hazardous materials management and management of flammable or combustible liquids and gases.

The Fire Marshal has required the applicant to install a 24 foot wide turnout at the entrance to the private road, another 22 foot wide turnout at the midpoint of the private road, and a 40 foot hammerhead turnaround at the end of the private road at the building location to ensure safe access for emergency fire apparatus and civilian evacuation concurrently. In addition, the Fire Marshal has requested the applicant to continue to coordinate with neighboring property owners to use best efforts to secure emergency fire access rights to the private Pacific Gas & Electric maintenance road that already exists and can allow for a secondary means of egress. The Fire Marshal has also required a Fire Protection Plan that documents fire access roads, including gates, emergency water supplies,

location of hazardous materials, employee training in the use of regulated materials to meet Fire Code requirements, and vegetation management. These conditions have been determined to provide for the Same Practical Effect (14 CCR §1270.06) in regards to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Safe Regulations, requirements for developments within the State Responsibility Area to provide for safe access for emergency wildfire equipment and civilian evacuation concurrently. This Exception for the Same Practical Effect (14 CCR §1270.06) was accepted by Sonoma County Fire Marshal in November of 2020 and submitted to CalFire.
The project as proposed would not require construction of new or expanded fire protection facilities, therefore project impacts on fire protection by the Sonoma County Fire Distrct would be considered less-than-significant.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

ii. Police?

Comment:
The Sonoma County Sheriff would continue to serve the project area. No housing or residential units would be constructed as part of the project. Although the project would increase employment opportunities (approximately 6 full-time employees), it is anticipated that the project would draw from local workers in the County and no indirect increase in population would occur. Additionally, the project would be required to comply with the security development standard for commercial cannabis cultivation facilities contained in County Zoning Code Section 26-88-254(f)(21), including implementation of a site security plan. The project would not necessitate or facilitate construction of new police protection facilities resulting in environmental impacts in order to maintain acceptable service ratios or response times.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

iii. Schools?

Comment:
No housing or residential units would be constructed as part of the project. Although the project would increase employment opportunities (approximately 6 full-time employees), it is anticipated that the project would draw from local workers in the County and no indirect increase in population would occur. Therefore, the project would not introduce new school age children in the project area, and would not necessitate or facilitate construction of new schools resulting in environmental impacts.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

iv. Parks?

Comment:
No residential units would be included in the project that would require the payment of parkland development fees. The proposed project does not involve the construction of new housing, which is the typical type of development that requires expansion of recreational facilities. Although the project would increase employment opportunities (approximately 6 full-time employees), it is anticipated that the project would draw from local workers in the County and no indirect increase in population would occur. Given the number of existing park and recreational options available in the project vicinity, the existing park facilities would be adequate and the project would not necessitate or facilitate construction of new parks resulting in environmental impacts.

Significance Level: No Impact

v. Other public facilities?

Comment:
The project would be served by public sewer or water facilities. No other public facilities are anticipated to be required as a result of the project.

Significance Level: No Impact

16. RECREATION

Would the project:

a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?

Comment:
The proposed project would not generate significant new demand for housing in the area (a maximum of six full time employees is proposed). Therefore, the project would not cause or accelerate substantial physical deterioration of parks or recreational facilities. The project would have no impact on the use of existing neighborhood or regional or other recreational facilities.

Significance Level: No Impact

b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

Comment:
The proposed project does not involve or require the construction of recreational facilities. The proposed project does not involve the construction of new housing, which is the typical type of development that requires expansion of recreational facilities. No impact would occur.

Significance Level: No Impact

17. TRANSPORTATION

Would the project:

a) Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?

Comment:
Average daily traffic volume has not been measured by the County along Los Alamos Road. The applicant submitted a “Cannabis Trip Generation” (PJR-126) form as requested by the County determined the project would be expected to generate an average of 4 trips per day. The cannabis operation would employ two-year round employees and four seasonal employees. The trip generation form accounts for all trips made to and from the site including trips associated with deliveries, visitors, and all operational activities that might occur based on a workforce of 6 employees. Due to the small number of employees and low number of peak hour trips, no traffic study is required by the County of Sonoma Guidelines for Traffic Impact Studies screening criteria, and no study was requested by the Transportation and Public Works Traffic Engineer during the project referral.

Access to the site is from an existing private road off of Los Alamos Road, which is classed as a County Road. There are no existing or planned mass transit improvements cited along Los Alamos Road. The project is not located on a bikeway facility. Los Alamos road does not have any traffic volume information available.

Project traffic is expected to have a less than significant impact on the traffic circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?

Comment:
In November 2017, the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) released a technical advisory containing recommendations regarding the assessment of vehicle miles travelled (VMT). VMT refers to the amount and distance of automobile travel attributable to a project. As noted in the OPR guidelines, agencies are directed to choose metrics that are appropriate for their jurisdiction to evaluate the potential impacts of a project in terms of VMT. The change to VMT was formally adopted as part of updates to the CEQA Guidelines on December 28, 2018. The current deadline for adopting policies to implement SB 743 and the provisions of CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3(b) is July 1, 2020. The County of Sonoma has not yet adopted VMT policies, and, until the County does, there is no guidance on how to evaluate the proposed project in terms of VMT. Per the Office of Planning and Research's (OPR's) Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA, under Screening Threshold for Small Projects, it states: "Absent substantial evidence indicating that a project would generate a potentially significant level of VMT, or inconsistency with a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) or general plan, projects that generate or attract fewer than 110 trips per day generally may be assumed to cause a less-than-significant transportation impact. Therefore, the project would not conflict with or be inconsistent with an applicable threshold of significance adopted per CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b).

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

Comment:
The project would not increase hazards because it would not change the existing alignment of the roadway. However, hazards to drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians could occur during construction activities including the widening of the entrance to the private road to 24 feet, installing a 22 foot turnout at the midpoint of the private road, and creating a fire truck turnaround and construction of a new retaining wall. This temporary construction-related impact would cease upon project completion.

Significance Level: Less than Significant

d) Result in inadequate emergency access?

Comment:
Development on the site must comply with all emergency access requirements of the Sonoma County Fire Safety Code (Sonoma County Code Chapter 13) and the Fire Safe Standards, including emergency vehicle access requirements. The Fire Marshal has required the applicant to install a 24 foot wide turnout at the entrance to the private road, another 22 foot wide turnout at the midpoint of the private road, and a 40 foot hammerhead turnaround at the end of the private road at the building location to ensure safe access for emergency fire apparatus and civilian evacuation concurrently. In addition, the Fire Marshal has requested the applicant to continue to coordinate with neighboring property owners to use best efforts to secure emergency fire access rights to the private Pacific Gas

& Electric maintenance road that already exists and can allow for a secondary means of egress. The Fire Marshal has also required a Fire Protection Plan that documents fire access roads, including gates, emergency water supplies, location of hazardous materials, employee training in the use of regulated materials to meet Fire Code requirements, and vegetation management. These conditions have been determined to provide for the Same Practical Effect (14 CCR §1270.06) in regards to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Safe Regulations, requirements for developments within the State Responsibility Area to provide for safe access for emergency wildfire equipment and civilian evacuation concurrently. This Exception for the Same Practical Effect (14 CCR §1270.06) was accepted by Sonoma County Fire Marshal in November of 2020 and submitted to CalFire.
Project development plans would require review by a Department of Fire and Emergency Services Fire Inspector during the building permit process to ensure compliance with emergency access issues.

Significance Level: Less than Significant

e) Result in inadequate parking capacity?

Comment:
Parking capacity is analyzed as a matter of County policy and not because such analysis is required by CEQA. Sonoma County Code Section 26-86 does not include specific parking requirements for cannabis cultivation land uses; however, similar uses such as warehousing recommend one space per 2,000 square feet of building floor area. The project would not be open to the public, and on-site parking would be designated primarily for employees. Project plans show the provision of four parking spaces (including one van-accessible space), which would adequately accommodate parking demand in accordance with parking regulations in the Sonoma County zoning code.

Significance Level: No Impact

18. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California native American tribe, and that is:

i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5030.1(k), or

ii) A resource determined by the lead agency. In its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code § 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code § 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

Comment:
Efforts to identify tribal cultural resources that could be affected by the project consisted of a records search at the Northwest Information Center, literature review, a sacred lands search through the Native American Heritage Commission, contact with appropriate local Native American Tribes, and a pedestrian archaeological survey of the project site.

California Native American tribes were notified according to Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1 on January 19, 2018. The request for consultation period ended on February 19, 2018, with no Native American tribes requesting consultation for the project. Additionally, completion of the Cultural Resources Study of 2000 Los Alamos Road (ARS, 2018), with no known tribal cultural resources identified. Refer to discussion in Section 5.b of this initial study. County's standard "accidental discovery" condition of approval, which shall be implemented in the event of an inadvertent discovery and reduce the potential impact to less than significant.

Significance Level: Less than Significant

19. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Would the project:

a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electrical power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?

Comment:
The project would not contribute to the need for construction or expansion of water or wastewater treatment facilities, other than use of an existing on-site groundwater well and an on-site septic system. The creation of new impervious surfaces at the site would increase storm water runoff, however, the project would collect rainwater from the rooftop of the new greenhouse, and storm water from other impervious surfaces would be conveyed to a new on-site detention basin that would be sized to treat storm water runoff in accordance with County requirements. Therefore, no off-site storm water drainage improvements would be required.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?

Comment:
As discussed in section 9.b, the project would use groundwater for its water source. A County-required hydrogeologic report determined that a sufficient groundwater supply is available to serve the project and that the project is unlikely to cause a decline in groundwater elevations or deplete groundwater resources over time. Potable water would be provided by an existing private well. The project would not contribute to the need for construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?

Comment:
An on-site septic system would be constructed to manage project wastewater. The project would not result in additional wastewater treatment demand for an off-site sanitation system.

Significance Level: No Impact

d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of

local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?

Comment:
Sonoma County has a solid waste management program in place that provides solid waste collection and disposal services for the entire County. The program can accommodate the permitted collection and disposal of the waste that would result from the proposed project. Active permitted regional landfills include the Redwood Sanitary Landfill (26 million cubic yards remaining capacity), Potrero Hills Landfill (13.9 million cubic yards remaining capacity), Vasco Road Landfill (7.4 million cubic yards remaining capacity), and Keller Canyon Landfill (63.4 million cubic yards remaining capacity) (CalRecycle 2016). Solid waste generated during construction and operation of the project would represent a small fraction of the daily permitted tonnage of these facilities.

Additionally, the project would be required to comply with the following operating standard for commercial cannabis cultivation facilities contained in County Zoning Code Section 26-88-254(g)(8):

> *A Waste Management Plan addressing the storing, handling and disposing of all waste by-products of the cultivation and processing activities in compliance with the Best Management Practices issued by the Agricultural Commissioner shall be submitted for review and approval by the agency having jurisdiction. This plan shall characterize the volumes and types of waste generated, and the operational measures that are proposed to manage and dispose, or reuse the wastes in compliance with Best Management Practices and County standards. All garbage and refuse on this site shall be accumulated or stored in non-absorbent, water-tight, vector resistant, durable, easily cleanable, galvanized metal or heavy plastic containers with tight fitting lids. No refuse container shall be filled beyond the capacity to completely close the lid. All garbage and refuse on this site shall not be accumulated or stored for more than seven calendar days, and shall be properly disposed of before the end of the seventh day in a manner prescribed by the Solid Waste Local Enforcement Agency. All waste, including but not limited to refuse, garbage, green waste and recyclables, must be disposed of in accordance with local and state codes, laws and regulations. All waste generated from cannabis operations must be properly stored and secured to prevent access from the public.*

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

Comment:
No applicable federal solid waste regulations would apply to the project. At the State level, the Integrated Waste Management Act mandates a reduction of waste being disposed and establishes an integrated framework for program implementation, solid waste planning, and solid waste facility and landfill compliance. Sonoma County has access to adequate permitted landfill capacity and reduction, reuse, and recycling programs to serve the proposed project. Construction and operational waste generated as a result of the project would require management and disposal in accordance with local and state regulations. The project would not conflict with or impede implementation of such programs.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

20. WILDFIRE

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire severity zones, would the project:

a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

Comment:

The project would not impair implementation of an adopted emergency response plan. There is no separate emergency evacuation plan for the County, and the project would not change existing circulation patterns or effect emergency response routes. The Fire Marshal has required the applicant to install a 24 foot wide turnout at the entrance to the private road, another 22 foot wide turnout at the midpoint of the private road, and a 40 foot hammerhead turnaround at the end of the private road at the building location to ensure safe access for emergency fire apparatus and civilian evacuation concurrently. In addition, the Fire Marshal has requested the applicant to continue to coordinate with neighboring property owners to use best efforts to secure emergency fire access rights to the private Pacific Gas & Electric maintenance road that already exists and can allow for a secondary means of egress. The Fire Marshal has also required a Fire Protection Plan that documents fire access roads, including gates, emergency water supplies, location of hazardous materials, employee training in the use of regulated materials to meet Fire Code requirements, and vegetation management. These conditions have been determined to provide for the Same Practical Effect (14 CCR §1270.06) in regards to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Safe Regulations, requirements for developments within the State Responsibility Area to provide for safe access for emergency wildfire equipment and civilian evacuation concurrently. This Exception for the Same Practical Effect (14 CCR §1270.06) was accepted by Sonoma County Fire Marshal in November of 2020 and submitted to CalFire

Project development plans would be required to be reviewed by a Department of Fire and Emergency Services Fire Inspector during the building permit process to ensure adequate emergency access is provided to the site.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?

Comment:
Wildfire risk is dependent upon existing environmental conditions, including but not limited to the amount of vegetation present, topography, and climate. The project site is located within a rural area surrounded by open fields and gently sloping hillsides. Climate in the area is characterized as Mediterranean, with cool wet winters and hot dry summers.

According to the Wildland Fire Hazard Area map in the Sonoma County General Plan, the project site is located in a State Responsibility area and in a High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. Projects located in High and Very High Fire Severity Zones are required by state and county code to have a detailed vegetation management plan developed and reviewed by the Sonoma County Fire Prevention Division before a building permit can be issued. This requirement does not apply to projects located in a Moderate Zone. However, all construction projects must comply with County Code Fire Code (Chapter 13) and Fire Safe Safe
Standards, including but not limited to, installing fire sprinklers in buildings, providing emergency vehicle access, and maintaining a dedicated fire-fighting water supply on-site.

In addition, the project would be required to comply with the following Development Standard for commercial cannabis cultivation facilities contained in County Zoning Code Section 26-88-254(f)(16):

The applicant shall prepare and implement a fire prevention plan for construction and ongoing operations and obtain any permits required from the fire and emergency services department. The fire prevention plan shall include, but not be limited to: emergency vehicle access and turnaround at the facility site(s), vegetation management and fire break maintenance around all structures.

The project would construct and operate a mixed light commercial cannabis facility within an area designated as having a high wildfire risk. The project does not propose to bring a substantial amount of persons to the site. Specifically the project proposes an average of 4 ADT (average daily trips) with two full time employees and an addition of four employees during the harvest season. Therefore traffic related to the project site is not a substantial intensification of the use in regards to exposing project occupants to wildfire risk.

Additionally, the project site is located within the fire scar of the 2020 Glass Fire. The project parcel has a western to eastern downhill slope with elevations ranging from 1,490 feet MSL along its northwestern boundary to 1,280 feet MSL along the eastern boundary. In addition, project components would be located approximately 1,900 feet from the base of a small gulch in which the Santa Rosa Creek runs. Thus, the project area has geographic features, including steep inclines and a gulch, that could potentially contribute to or augment fire intensity.

The project would be required to be built in compliance with applicable Fire Safe Standards, including provision of adequate emergency access and fire water supply, which would reduce the potential hazard of wildfires. The Fire Marshal has required the applicant to install a 24 foot wide turnout at the entrance to the private road, another 22 foot wide turnout at the midpoint of the private road, and a 40 foot hammerhead turnaround at the end of the private road at the building location to ensure safe access for emergency fire apparatus and civilian evacuation concurrently. In addition, the Fire Marshal has requested the applicant to continue to coordinate with neighboring property owners to use best efforts to secure emergency fire access rights to the private Pacific Gas & Electric maintenance road that already exists and can allow for a secondary means of egress. The Fire Marshal has also required a Fire Protection Plan that documents fire access roads, including gates, emergency water supplies, location of hazardous materials, employee training in the use of regulated materials to meet Fire Code requirements, and vegetation management. These conditions have been determined to provide for the Same Practical Effect (14 CCR §1270.06) in regards to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Safe Regulations, requirements for developments within the State Responsibility Area to provide for safe access for emergency wildfire equipment and civilian evacuation concurrently. This Exception for the Same Practical Effect (14 CCR §1270.06) was accepted by Sonoma County Fire Marshal in November of 2020 and submitted to CalFire.

Therefore, the project would have a less than significant impact regarding exposing project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire.

Significance Level: Less than Significant

c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?

Comment:
Proposed infrastructure improvements would include improvements such as a fire truck turnaround, supported by a new retaining wall and would be constructed to the south of the proposed cultivation structures. The improvements would widen and improve the angle for access to the private road . Prior to the 2020 fire, there was previously an existing emergency water source on the property in the form of a 5,000-gallon water tank that stores approximately 2,500 gallons of water for fire suppression, which will be replaced upon project implementation. The project would include the installation of fire breaks around the new building and new greenhouse, and maintenance of the existing private access road and parking area. There is an existing private access road on the property. The project will implement two turn outs along existing private access road off of Los Alamos Road. A Pacific Gas and Electric transmission tower is located on the project site, however Pacific Gas and Electric, would continue to manage maintenance of this utility facility.

The Fire Marshal has required the applicant to install a 24 foot wide turnout at the entrance to the private road, another 22 foot wide turnout at the midpoint of the private road, and a 40 foot

hammerhead turnaround at the end of the private road at the building location to ensure safe access for emergency fire apparatus and civilian evacuation concurrently. In addition, the Fire Marshal has requested the applicant to continue to coordinate with neighboring property owners to use best efforts to secure emergency fire access rights to the private Pacific Gas & Electric maintenance road that already exists and can allow for a secondary means of egress. The Fire Marshal has also required a Fire Protection Plan that documents fire access roads, including gates, emergency water supplies, location of hazardous materials, employee training in the use of regulated materials to meet Fire Code requirements, and vegetation management. These conditions have been determined to provide for the Same Practical Effect (14 CCR §1270.06) in regards to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Safe Regulations, requirements for developments within the State Responsibility Area to provide for safe access for emergency wildfire equipment and civilian evacuation concurrently. This Exception for the Same Practical Effect (14 CCR §1270.06) was accepted by Sonoma County Fire Marshal in November of 2020 and submitted to CalFire .

The project components of an on-site water supply source and water storage to provide required fire suppression, turn outs along the private access road, an upgraded private road with a turnaround space for emergency vehicles and inclusion of required design aspects in order to comply with the state Fire Safe Standards and the County Fire Code (Chapter 13). In addition, Zoning Code Development Standards require implementation of a fire prevention plan and vegetation management. Installation and maintenance of the proposed minor infrastructure improvements are not anticipated to exacerbate fie risk or result in temporary or ongoing environmental impacts.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

Comment:
The project site is not located in an area at high risk for flooding, such as a 100-year flood hazard area. The project would not substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner, which would result in flooding on or off site, therefore site development for the project, will not significantly alter the existing drainage pattern of the site.

There are no streams, drainage channels, or wetland features on the project site. Site drainage occurs by overland flow to the east; the parcel slopes strongly to the east. Elevations range from 1,490 feet MSL along the northwestern parcel boundary to 1,280 feet MSL along the eastern parcel boundary. Existing site elevations and topography would remain largely unchanged after project construction, and overall drainage patterns would essentially remain the same.

Additionally, development of the project site will be required to comply with the Grading and Drainage Ordinance and Bes Management Practices (Municipal Code Chapter 11) and County Stormwater Quality Ordinance (Municipal Code Chapter 11A) and all other applicable standards related to slope stability. These standards will address the project site's post fire conditions and any slope sensitive issues in regards to build out of the site. Therefore, it is not anticipated that the project would expose people or structures to significant risks including flooding or landslides as a result of runoff, post-fire instability, or drainage changes.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

21. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community,

substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

Comment:
Potential project impacts to special status plant and wildlife species and habitat are addressed in Section 4. Biological Resources. Implementation of the required mitigation measures would reduce these potential impacts to a less than significant level.

Significance Level: Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?

Comment:
Section 15355 of the CEQA Guidelines state: *Cumulative impacts refers to two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts.* Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time. A search was undertaken to identify reasonably foreseeable projects in the vicinity of the proposed project area that might have overlapping or cumulative impacts. Seven other applicants have applied for cannabis cultivation projects in the unincorporated northeastern Santa Rosa area (about a 7-mile radius from the project site). The project parcels range from 25 to 90 acres in size and the projects range from 10,000 square feet to 1 acre in size. Five of these are working through the County permit program; the remaining project has an incomplete application which is not currently being processed.

The large average parcel size in the surrounding area reduces potential for cumulative aesthetic impacts related to additional construction or commercial activity that could occur in the area because such future uses would likely be separated enough to diminish the visual impact on the overall viewshed.

The cumulative impact area for the groundwater report was centered on the project well and includes multiple wells located within 0.8 miles of the project site. 6 parcels ranging from 14 to 562 acres in size contain the wells examined. The average parcel size is 166 acres and altogether the parcels total approximately 994 acres. All of the parcels are in areas of low or highly variable water yield (Class 4). The proposed project's most conservative annual water demand (without subtracting anticipated offsets from rainwater or greywater capture and reuse) increases the current total water demand within the cumulative impact area by only 7.0%.

The combined project contributions are not anticipated to rise to a cumulatively considerable level.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

Comment:
All potential environmental effects of the project were analyzed. Some environmental impacts, including those related to air quality/odor, traffic, and risk of wildfire, could have adverse effects on human beings. However, implementation of the recommended mitigation measures identified in this Initial Study would reduce these impacts to a less than significant level.

Significance Level: Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

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