



Environmental Groups Appeal Yet Another Cannabis Grow Due to Unaddressed Concerns About Impacts

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(Eureka, CA) The Humboldt County Board of Supervisors will hold a special meeting on Monday, June 13, 2022, to hear an Appeal of the Blocksburg Family Farm Cannabis Cultivation Permits. Citizens for a Sustainable Humboldt (CSH) and the Northcoast Environmental Center (NEC) filed this Appeal of the 6.39-acre cannabis mega-grow due to unaddressed concerns about environmental and social impacts.

On May 5th, the Planning Commission adopted a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the project despite substantial evidence that indicates the Project is of an industrial size and scope that should require a full Environmental Impact Report (EIR). CSH and NEC are asking the Board to support this Appeal and deny the permits, or else require that a full EIR is prepared before the Project operations commence.

Concerns stem from the location of the proposed grow in a remote rural area, and include:

- The use of gasoline generators for the initial phase of the project (2-3 years), refueled by hand from five gallon containers.
- Greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation of 25 employees to the remote worksite.
- Public safety issues presented by the inadequate access roads leading to the Project, in an area vulnerable to wildfires and far from emergency services.
- Groundwater extraction for cultivation of two additional acres before adequate water storage is developed, and without proper analysis of potential hydrologic connection of wells to surface waters, as well as improper well testing in violation of County regulations.
- Cumulative impacts to the rare prairie grassland that the project is located in.

“When the Commercial Medical Marijuana Land Use Ordinance (CMMLUO) was adopted, the stated intent was to discourage cannabis cultivation in undeveloped remote areas and encourage cultivation on agricultural land close to existing infrastructure. This project IS NOT consistent with the intent of the CMMLUO,” said Robie Tenorio of CSH. “Because of these

concerns, the Board of Supervisors should uphold this appeal and require a full EIR so the public, and the neighbors, can assess the potential impacts of this grow.”

Mary Gaterud, Board President of CSH, is baffled by the apparent disregard by County Staff of codified State and County regulations for access road requirements and well testing. “As a small cultivator who has been put through the wringer to ensure that my minuscule operation upholds the letter of the law, I am mystified by the County’s green light for huge projects that do not conform to the rules—which were designed for exactly this kind of industrial scale.”

Caroline Griffith, Executive Director of the NEC, agrees. “This is exactly why we have these processes, so the potential environmental impacts of industries can be brought to light and transparently assessed. The fact that Humboldt County appears to be rubber-stamping projects that clearly have impacts is concerning. We would like to see the full impacts of this proposed project assessed, or the application denied. The stated intent of the Humboldt County Cannabis Land Use Ordinance was to bring these grows out of the wildlands and mitigate environmental impacts. This project does not fit that intent.”

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