



County of Santa Cruz
Cannabis Licensing Office
701 Ocean Street, Room 520
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
831-454-3833
Cannabisinfo@santacruzcounty.us



CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

The Santa Cruz County Cannabis Licensing Office has reviewed the project described below and has determined that it is exempt from the provisions of CEQA as specified in Sections 15061 - 15332 of CEQA for the reason(s) which have been specified in this document.

Application Number: License NR-C-0065 (DNA), NR-C-0066 (McCuen), NR-0067 (Strong)
Assessor Parcel Number: 109-091-06
Project Location: 1363 Green Valley Rd., Watsonville 95076

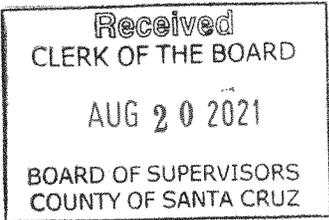
Project Description: Outdoor cannabis cultivation (see attached "Project Description Preparation Form_1363 Green Valley Rd.")

Person or Agency Proposing Project: Matt Groves (DNA Organics)

Contact Phone Number:

- A. The proposed activity is not a project under CEQA Guidelines Section 15378.
- B. The proposed activity is not subject to CEQA as specified under CEQA Guidelines Section 15060 (c).
- C. **Ministerial Project** involving only the use of fixed standards or objective measurements without personal judgment.
- D. **Statutory Exemption** other than a Ministerial Project (CEQA Guidelines Section 15260 to 15285).
- E. **Categorical Exemption**

Specify type: Class 1: Use of existing facilities; Class 4: Minor Alterations to Land; Class 11: Accessory Structures.



THIS NOTICE HAS BEEN POSTED AT THE CLERK
OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OFFICE FOR A
PERIOD COMMENCING 8/20/2021
AND ENDING 9/19/2021



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Class	Category	Description
Class 1	Existing Facilities	Consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing at the time of the lead agency's determination. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, §15301.)
Class 4	Minor Alterations to Land	Consists of minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry and agricultural purposes. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15304.)
Class 11	Accessory Structures	Consists of construction, or placement of minor structures accessory to (appurtenant to) existing commercial, industrial, or institutional facilities (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15311.)

F. Reasons why the project is exempt:

Cultivation on an existing commercially-farmed property.

In addition, none of the conditions described in Section 15300.2 apply to this project.

DocuSigned by:

Sam LoForti

8/16/2021

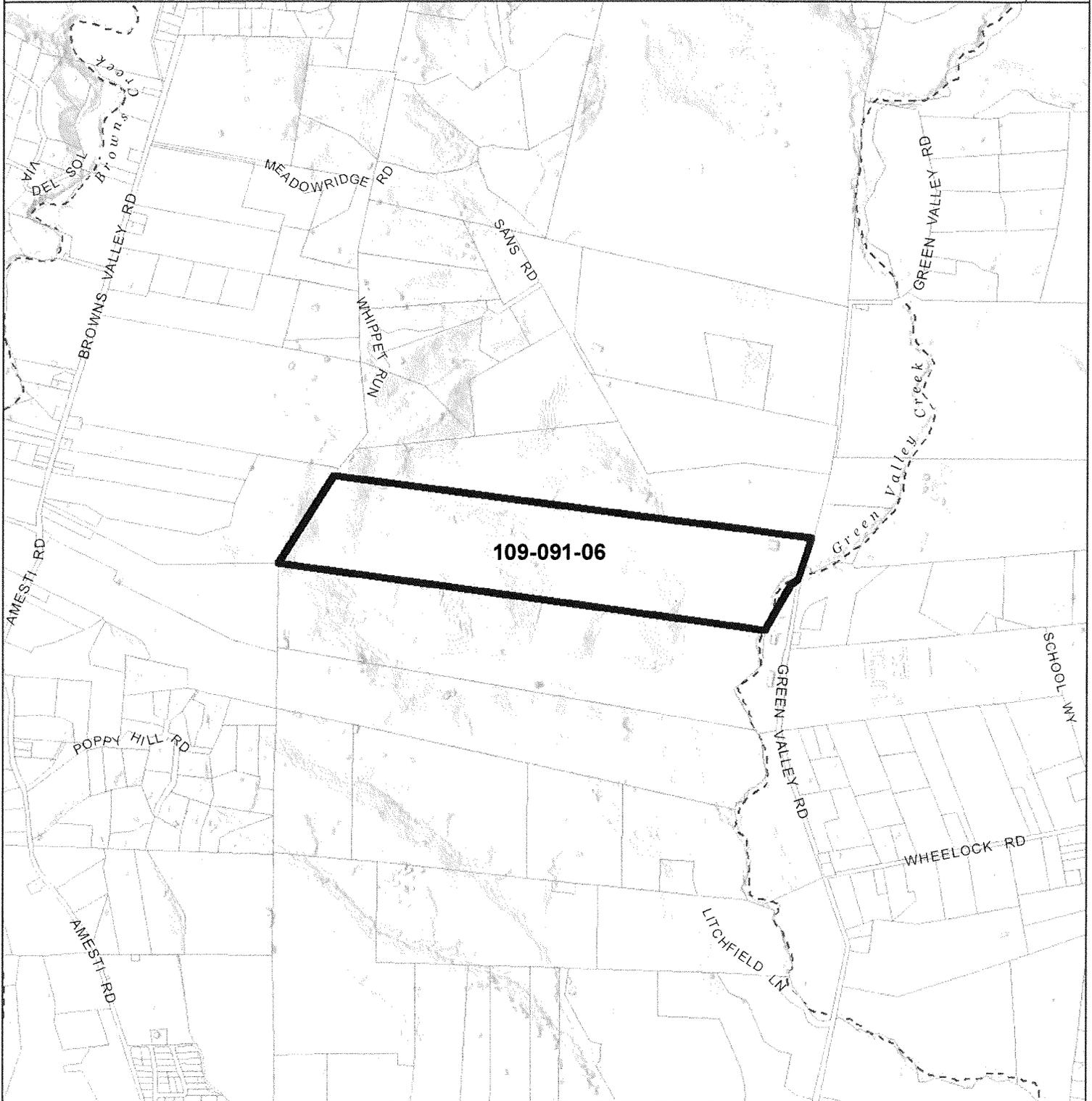
Date: _____

Sam LoForti, Cannabis Licensing Manager

ATTACHMENTS: Location Map: "Project Description Preparation Form_1363 Green Valley Rd."; "Property Diagram McCuen_CA_1A"; "Property Diagram Strong_CA_2B"; BMOP_Strong Agronomy; 1363 GVR addendum.



Parcel Location Map

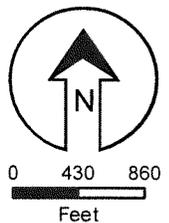


109-091-06

Parcel: 10909106

-  Study Parcel
-  Assessor Parcel Boundary

Map printed: 10 Aug. 2021



Project Description Preparation Form

Lead Agency: County of Santa Cruz Cannabis Licensing Office

Applicant Entity/Business Name: Matthew Groves/DNA Organics et. al. (see attached)

License Type(s): Class CA Outdoor Cultivation

Date: August 16, 2021

1. Source(s) of Information:

Identify Sources: SC County License Application Submission

2. Project Location:

Describe Project Location: 1363 Green Valley Rd., Watsonville CA. (Lat: 36 58 40.0835; Long: -122 1 21.2146)

Maps Included: 1363 GVR Location Map; 1363_GVR Cultivation_Diagrams

3. Description of Project Site:

General Topographic Features (slopes and other features): 88-acre property. Mostly level and developed with a home site, apple processing barn, and agricultural area.

Natural Features (general vegetation types, presence of streams and wetlands, forested areas): The western 2/3 of the parcel is characterized by moderately-sloped hills with orchards on terraces interspersed with oak woodlands on slopes. The eastern-most third of the property (and location of the cultivation and processing area) is flat. A riparian woodland on the left bank of Green Valley Creek is contiguous with the eastern boundary of the parcel.

Existing Land Uses/Zoning: Commercial agriculture (CA) zoning for orchards, row crops, and berries. Cannabis cultivation is a principally-permitted use under the CA zoning regulations.

Existing Constructed Features (buildings, facilities, and other improvements): 1 single-family residence, 1 agricultural processing building

Surrounding Land Uses (including sensitive uses): Commercial agriculture w/ residences.

4. Required Site Improvements and Construction Activities:

Site Improvements: The project consists of outdoor cannabis cultivation (immature and mature/flowering plantings). Harvested cannabis will be dried and processed on-site in an existing agricultural processing building. Improvements include enclosure of the flowering plant cultivation area with a 6 ft. security fence, enclosure of a 200 sf. cannabis waste composting area, and the installation of motion-sensor lights and digital cameras for security.

Construction Activities: None.

5. Operation and Maintenance Activities:

Hours of Operation/Work Shifts: 7:00am to 7:00pm

Number of employees (total and by shift): (4) resident-operators. (12-16) temporary workers for harvest.

Estimated Daily Trip Generation: 2 or fewer round-trips per day on average.

Source(s) of Water: Agricultural water well on the property

Wastewater Treatment Facilities: Septic system serving the Residence and port-a-pottys

Source(s) of Power: PG&E service

- 6. Environmental Commitments:** “Best Management and Operational Practices” (BMOP) requirements apply to all non-retail commercial cannabis businesses to reduce the environmental impacts of cannabis operations (Santa Cruz County Code Ch. 7.128.090.(A)(1)(a)(xi). A BMOP plan for this project was reviewed by the Cannabis Licensing Office and is kept on file with the license application. BMOP requirements for this project are noted below:

BMOP “Siting Criteria” (Section A) and “Site Design” (Section B) measures to avoid and minimize impact to land and biotic resources include: Avoidance of Excessive Grading (A.1.), Minimizing Site Disturbance (A.2.), Fencing and Security (B.1.), Use of Impermeable and Permeable Surfaces (B.2.), Visual Blending of Cannabis Infrastructure (B.3.), Water Resources-Drainage (B.3.), and Water Storage (B.5.)

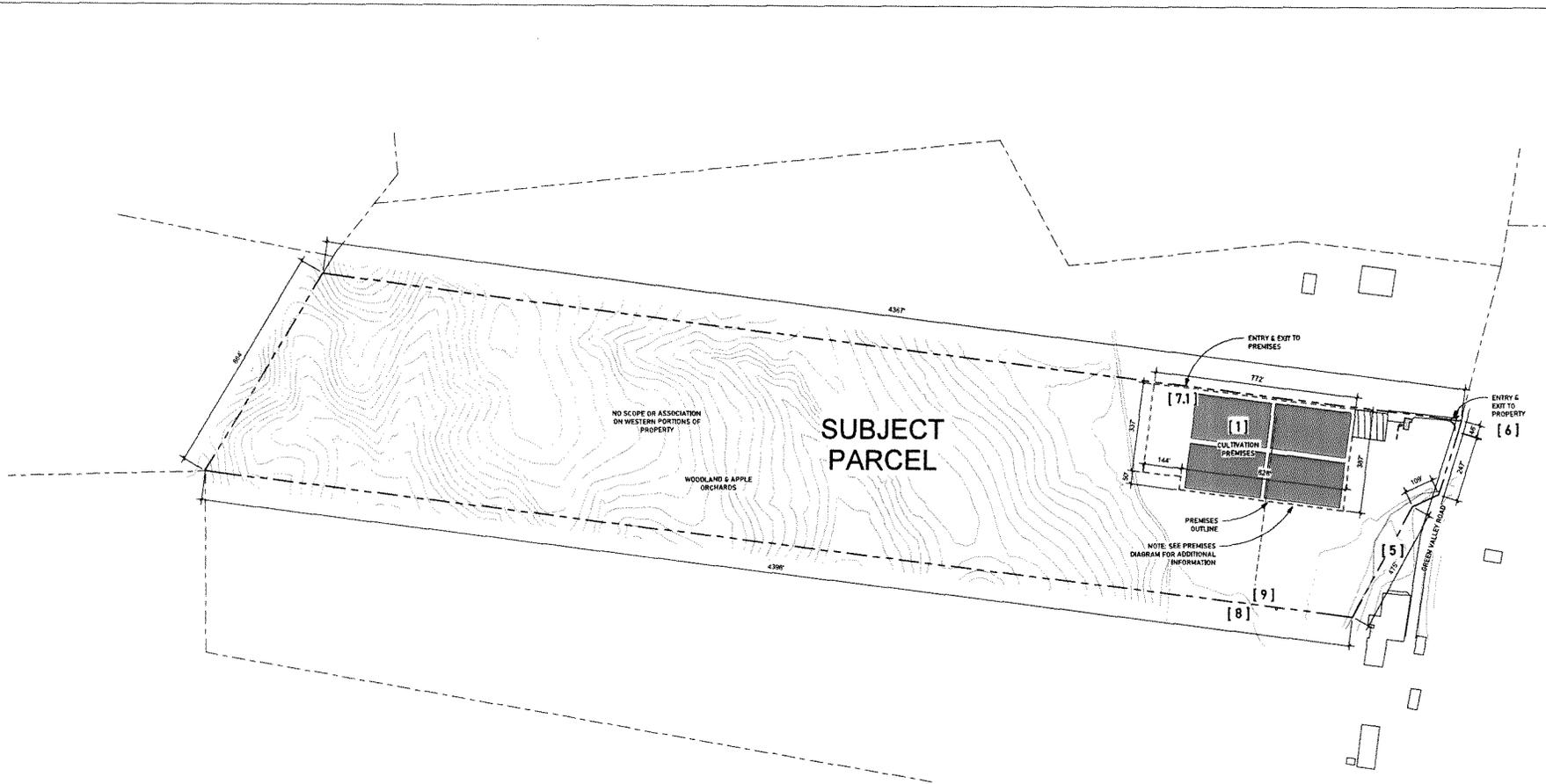
BMOP Section D. “Operational Requirements” adopted by McCuen Management and Strong Agronomy and approved by the Cannabis Licensing Office include: Employees-Implement TDM measures (1.a.), Herbivory Prevention Plan (Section D.2.), Riparian Buffer Protection (D.3.), Storage and Use of Pesticides, Fuel, and Hazardous Materials (D.5.), Water Supply and Quality (D.7.), Waste (D.8.), Access Roads (D.11.)

Exceptions to categorical exemptions cited for the proposed non-retail cannabis project include: Class 1 “Existing Facilities”, Class 4 “Minor Alterations to Land”, Class 11 “Accessory Structures”. The County of Santa Cruz Cannabis Licensing Office has determined that the proposed project 1) is not visible from scenic highways and/or impactful to scenic resources, 2) is not located on a “Cortese List” site, 3) does not substantially change a historic resource, 4) is likely to not contribute to a significant cumulative environmental impact, 5) is not subject (by location and/or design) to unusual circumstances that would reasonably contribute to a significant environmental impact.

- 7. Environmental Permits Required** (List all required federal, state, and local permits required):

Agency	Permit	Status
California Department of Food and Agriculture, CalCannabis	Annual Cultivation License	CCL21-0000679 (DNA); CCL20-0002986 (McCuen); CCL21-0001659 (Strong)

Agency	Permit	Status
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	Section 1602 Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement	EPIMS-SCR-12558-R3
State Water Resources Control Board / Regional Water Quality Control Board	Water quality protection program	WDID# 3_44CC428262



1 PROPERTY DIAGRAM "McCUEN"
1" = 200'-0"

SITE PLAN LEGEND

	PROPERTY LINE
	SETBACK LINES (PLANNING)
	SETBACK LINES (CANNABIS)
	TREE DRIP LINE
	FENCING
	SECURE WASTE AREA (SWA) - COMPOST
	SECURE HARVEST AREA (SHA) - TEMPORARY TRAILERS
	CULTIVATION - OUTDOOR ROW CROP
	MCUEN MANAGEMENT
	ACCESSORY STRUCTURES - UNRELATED TO CULTIVATION

SITE PLAN KEY

[10]	CO-LICENSE NO. 1 LICENSE # _____ MCUEN MANAGEMENT MEDIUM OUTDOOR LICENCE HOOP HOUSE CULTIVATION 43,540sq MATURE CANNOPY OUTDOOR AREA 21,625sq MATURE AREA (ROTATION 1 ONLY)	[15]	PROPERTY 1363 GREEN VALLEY ROAD, Watsonville, CA 95076 APN: 109-09-106 ACTIVE USE PORTION OF SITE : 1200' x 700'	[16]	PESTICIDE STORAGE LOCATED IN NEW SHED (10' X 10') IN PRE-MANUFACTURED STORAGE LOCKER (43' X 18' X 43')
[11]	CO-LICENSE NO. 2 DETAIL, NOT SHOWN	[16]	ENTRY / EXIT TO THE PROPERTY 34°5'579.17N 121°44'38.61W	[17]	CARGO CONTAINER (EQUIPMENT SHED) 10' X 10' WEIGHSTATION INSIDE
		[17]	ENTRY / EXIT TO THE PREMISES	[18]	SECURE HARVEST STORAGE AREA (SHA) MCUEN : LOCATED IN EXISTING AGRICULTURAL STORAGE BARN (104' X 124')
		[18]	LOCATION OF BENEFICIAL WATER SOURCE (EXISTING WELL) TO BE USED FOR CANNABIS CULTIVATION COORDINATES OF WELL: 34°5'579.17N 121°44'38.61W	[19]	ADMINISTRATIVE HOLD AREA (AHA) MCUEN : LOCATED IN EXISTING AGRICULTURAL STORAGE BARN (20' X 40')
		[19]	WATER DISTRIBUTION BELOW-GROUND WATER LINES IRRIGATION PUMPED FROM WELL DIRECTLY NO WATER STORAGE	[20]	SECURE WASTE AREA (SWA) 10' X 20' CROP COMPOST
				[21]	TEMPORARY HARVEST STAGING (24' X 24') LOCATED IN HOOP-HOUSE AT END OF ROWS ONLY IN USE DURING ACTIVE HARVEST

NOTES:
NO WATERCROSSING ON SITE
NO SHARED FACILITIES, AREAS, ETC.
NO MANUFACTURING OR PROCESSING ON SITE

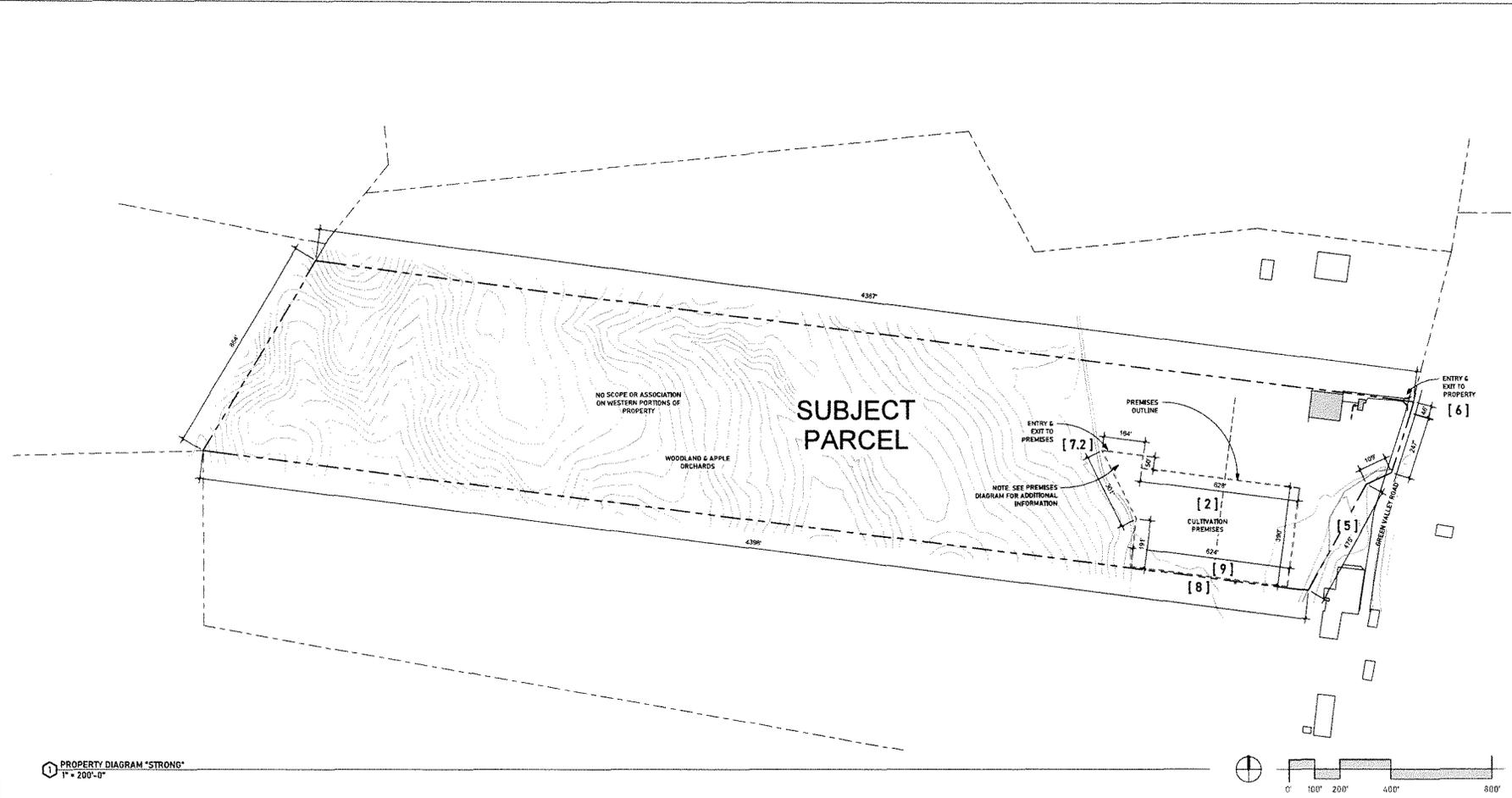
07/12/21

PROPERTY
DIAGRAM
"McCUEN"



07/12/21

PROPERTY DIAGRAM "STRONG"



1 PROPERTY DIAGRAM "STRONG"
1" = 200'-0"

SITE PLAN LEGEND

	PROPERTY LINE
	SETBACK LINES (PLANNING)
	SETBACK LINES (CANNABIS)
	TREE DROP LINE
	FENCING
	SECURE WASTE AREA (SWA) - COMPOST
	CULTIVATION : OUTDOOR - STRONG AGRONOMY
	FUTURE LICENSE
	ACCESSORY STRUCTURES - UNRELATED TO CULTIVATION

SITE PLAN KEY

[1]	CO-LICENSE NO. 1 DETAIL NOT SHOWN	[5]	PROPERTY 1363 GREEN VALLEY ROAD, Watsonville, CA 95074 APN: 109-09-106 ACTIVE USE PORTION OF SITE : 1,100' x 700'	[10]	PESTICIDE STORAGE LOCATED IN NEW SHED (10' X 10') IN PRE-MANUFACTURED STORAGE SHED (43' x 18' x 43')
[2.1]	CO-LICENSE NO. 2.1 LICENSE # LC421-0008459 STRONG AGRONOMY SMALL OUTDOOR, HOOP-HOUSE CULTIVATION +10,000sf MATURE CANOPY 97,920sf IMMATURE PLANT AREA (ROTATION 1 ONLY)	[6.1]	ENTRY / EXIT TO THE PROPERTY 34°5'19.7"N 121°46'28.0"W	[11]	CARGO CONTAINER (EQUIPMENT SHED) 30' x 80' WEIGHSTATION WITHIN
[2.2]	FUTURE LICENSE SMALL OUTDOOR, HOOP-HOUSE CULTIVATION +10,000sf MATURE CANOPY	[7.2]	ENTRY / EXIT TO THE PREMISES (STRONG)	[12]	NOT USED
[2.2]	FUTURE LICENSE SMALL OUTDOOR, HOOP-HOUSE CULTIVATION +10,000sf MATURE CANOPY	[8]	LOCATION OF BENEFICIAL WATER SOURCE (EXISTING WELL) TO BE USED FOR CANNABIS CULTIVATION COORDINATES OF WELL: 34°5'12.0"N 121°46'44.2"W	[13]	ADMINISTRATIVE HOLD AREA (AHA) LOCATED IN NEW SHED (10' X 10')
[2.3]	FUTURE LICENSE SMALL OUTDOOR, HOOP-HOUSE CULTIVATION +10,000sf MATURE CANOPY	[9]	WATER DISTRIBUTION BELOW-GROUND WATER LINES IRRIGATION PUMPED FROM WELL DIRECTLY NO WATER STORAGE	[14]	SECURE WASTE AREA (SWA) 10' x 20' CROP COMPOST
[2.4]	FUTURE LICENSE SMALL OUTDOOR, HOOP-HOUSE CULTIVATION +10,000sf MATURE CANOPY			[15]	TEMPORARY HARVEST STAGING (24' x 24') FOR EACH LICENSE LOCATED IN HOOP-HOUSE AT END OF ROWS ONLY IN USE DURING ACTIVE HARVEST
[2.5]	FUTURE LICENSE SMALL OUTDOOR, HOOP-HOUSE CULTIVATION +10,000sf MATURE CANOPY				

NOTES:
NO WATERCROSSING ON SITE
NO SHARED FACILITIES AREAS, ETC.
NO CROP STORAGE, DRYING, MANUFACTURING, PROCESSING NOR PACKAGING ON SITE

**Best Management and Operations Plan
Strong Agronomy**

**1363 Green Valley Road, Watsonville, CA 95076
APN 109-091-06**

A. Siting Criteria:

1. **Avoidance of Excessive Grading** – Planned cannabis cultivation areas and infrastructure have been carefully sited in order to prevent excessive grading or disturbance. No cannabis cultivation will take place on grades greater than 20% nor will any access roads or driveways used to access commercial cannabis facilities cross slopes greater than 20%.
2. **Minimizing Site Disturbance and Reducing Forest Fragmentation** – There is no existing forest at the proposed cultivation site, thus no forestry will be impacted by site development. The cultivation strategy is to grow cannabis directly in the native soil, thus none of the development will permanently alter the soil.
3. **Biological Assessments** – The County GIS shows no biotic resources at the property, thus no biotic assessment is required.
4. **Archaeological and Paleontological Surveys** – The County GIS shows that a portion of the property has archaeological resources, yet as the property has been commercially farmed for the past 100 years no archaeological or paleontological assessments are required.
5. **Historic Assessment of Structures 50 Years Old or More** – The site does not contain any structures 50 years older or more, thus no historic assessment is required.
6. **Preservation of Agricultural Lands** – The site plan and proposed development have been designed specifically to minimize loss of cultivable soils. All proposed structures are temporary and are sited in such a manner to remove as little land as possible from agricultural production thus preserving and promoting agriculture.

B. Site Design:

1. **Fencing and Security** – All cultivation areas at the property will be fenced in as to deter pests and protect cannabis crops from damage and predation by animals. Coupled with the fencing, security cameras will also be installed to deter intruders and theft.

- a. **Wildlife-Friendly Fencing and Neighborhood Compatibility** – Fencing specifications are based upon the Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks guide as per the BMOP. The proposed exclusionary fencing design is 6 foot tall 14 gauge galvanized steel welded wire fencing with 4"x4" upper grid pattern, and 2"x4" lower grid pattern on the bottom 24" of the fence. Please see Sheet A20 for additional fence details and elevations. The wire mesh fence will keep out deer and other medium to large sized animals. No trees will need to be removed for the fencing plan. The least amount of fencing possible will be used to secure the cultivation areas. Because cultivation is taking place on a commercial scale using tractors and implements in order to tend to the soil, there will be room within the fenced in cultivation area for the tractor to maneuver and accomplish standard commercial agriculture practices. Please see Sheet A13 for fencing layout on the parcel.
 - b. **Lighting for Security** – Lighting necessary for security shall consist solely of motion-sensor lights and will avoid adverse impacts on properties surrounding the lot on which the cannabis activity is located. Please refer to the Security Plan for detail on lighting placement.
2. **Use of Impermeable and Permeable Surfaces** – The cultivation plan is to grow cannabis natively in the soil thus minimal impermeable or permeable surface development is required for cultivation activities.
3. **Visual Blending of Cannabis Infrastructure** – There is not an expected need to blend cannabis infrastructure. All existing and proposed infrastructure is built on commercial agriculture land to commercial agriculture standards.
4. **Water Resources – Drainage** – New and existing cannabis facilities at the property will meet County and State requirements for water drainage.
5. **Water Storage** – All water storage will comply with planning department regulations for tank construction and setbacks from structures.

C. Construction Requirements:

1. **Active Construction Requirements**
 - a. **Seasonal Restriction** – Construction will not take place during the rainy season.
 - b. **Roosting Bat or Nesting Bed Survey** – No clearance of existing mature vegetation will be required thus no survey should be required.
 - c. **Work Hours** – Construction will not be initiated until 30 minutes after sunrise, and all outdoor construction activity will cease 30 minutes prior to sunset.

- d. **Worker Environmental Awareness Program** – Any contractor and associated employees engaged in ground breaking activities shall participate in a pre-activity training program with a qualified biologist.
- e. **Prevention of Spread of Invasive Plants and Weeds** – In accordance with best agricultural practices, the property will be managed in such a way that minimizes and eliminates invasive plants and weeds. Proposed cultivation practices including cover crop and regenerative farming practices will reduce the presence of weeds and invasive plants.
- f. **Sediment Control Measures** – Sediment will be controlled via the Site Management Plan prepared for the State Water Resource Control Board.
- g. **Staging and Storage Areas** – Storage areas for fuel and fertilizers will be established which are compliant with current code. Please see Sheet A13.
- h. **Spill Containment** – Spill containment kits will be in place at the property for fuel and fertilizer storage.
- i. **Open Pipe Restriction** – Open pipes will be covered and securely capped when not in use as to avoid occupancy and/or entrapment of wildlife.
- j. **Open Trenches** – Any open trenches, pits, or holes with depths greater than 1 foot will be covered at conclusion of work each day.
- k. **Soils Placement** – Soils are placed in proximity the cultivation area which are far from any streams, wetlands, riparian area, and other sensitive habitats.
- l. **Intake Screens** – No surface water diversion is required at the property.
- m. **Vegetation Removal** – No vegetation will be required to be removed at the property.
- n. **Riparian Buffers** – Riparian buffer setbacks are satisfied at the property.
- o. **Post-Construction Revegetation** – Any revegetation required will be accomplished by using a local cover crop mix.

D. Operation Requirements:

1. Employees

- a. **Implement TDM Measures** – Employees are encouraged to carpool to the property.

- ii. For all other pesticides, use complies with all label requirements including site and crop restrictions.
- iii. Cultivation manager has obtained a Pesticide Operator ID from Santa Cruz County Agricultural Commissioner.
- iv. Monthly pesticide use reports submitted to the Santa Cruz County Agricultural Commissioner.

c. Fertilizer Use

- i. Prior to applying fertilizers, evaluation is made of irrigation water, soils, growth media, and plant tissue to optimize plant growth and avoid over fertilization.
- ii. Fertilizers will be applied at or below label rates.
- iii. Fertilizers will not be applied in a way that will result in runoff that may contaminate ground or surface water. Fertilizer is applied as a foliar to the leaves or to the soil via drip irrigation.

d. Storage of Fuel – Fuel is stored and handled with applicate state and local laws and regulations.

- i. Fuel is stored more than 100 feet from any water source with no discharge path to water.
- ii. Proper storage instructions shall be posted and visible to all employees.
- iii. Supply of spill clean-up material shall be stored near the storage area.

6. Odor Abatement Plan – Odors due to outdoor cannabis cultivation at the Subject Parcel have been mitigated to the maximum extent possible given the topography of the site and neighboring sensitive receptors. Seasonal temporary cannabis harvest and storage trailers are located far away from any neighboring sensitive receptors.

7. Water Supply and Quality

- a. **California State Water Resources Control Board** – Site management plan and nitrogen management plan are under development and will be sent to the State Water Board in accordance with State annual cultivation license submittal. An application has been started with the State Water Board and the application fee has been paid. Strong Agronomy will be compliant with all regulations and requirements of the California State Water Resources Control Board.

b. Department of Fish and Wildlife – A Standard Agreement application has been filed with the Department of Fish and Wildlife and is under process. Strong Agronomy will be compliant with all regulations and requirements of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

c. Water Tank Supply Management

i. Water to fill water tanks is sourced from a agricultural well located on the subject property.

1. All water used for cultivation purposes is sourced from the agricultural well.

d. Irrigation – Irrigation is conducted in a manner that does not result in waste or runoff from the cultivated area. Irrigation methods employed at the property are described below.

i. Timed drip irrigation.

ii. Evaporative barriers on exposed soils and pots.

iii. Irrigation only when soil is dry.

iv. Water at rates that avoid run off.

v. Regular inspection and maintenance of irrigation systems.

vi. Float valves and other checks in place to prevent overflow of water tanks.

vii. Constant effort to improve efficiency through technology and watering techniques.

viii. Documentation program in place for irrigation, meters installed to measure irrigation use.

8. Waste

i. **Green Waste Management** – All cannabis waste from operations will be mulched and composted on site in a secure, fenced area, including soil, plant material, and solid waste. The compost is split amongst plant material, soil, and onsite livestock waste. Composting areas are not located in riparian areas. Soil is reused in propagation and other compost is used as soil amendment. See compost areas shown on Sheet A13

ii. **Litter Control** – Litter on site is controlled heavily, and all employees or contract labor cleans workspace at the close of the day. Dumpsters and trash cans for waste and recycling are provided in close proximity to the work site. See dumpster and recycling location on Sheet A13

9. **Alternative Energy Sources** – Cultivation takes place outdoors and requires very little supplemental power, only in the form of power for water pumps supplying irrigation.
10. **Energy Conservation** – Energy efficiency is maximized at the property by not using supplemental lighting.
11. **Access Roads** – The existing access roads at property will continue to be used and will be maintained.
12. **Site Closure or Cleanup and Restoration Plan for Relocated Cultivation Sites** – No infrastructure specific to cannabis is being developed that will not be usable for traditional agricultural uses. A plan to safely remove any materials associated with developed will be created and used in the event of any site closure.

1363 Green Valley Rd. Applicant/Businesses for cannabis licenses:

Matthew Groves/DNA Organics; NR-C-0065

Darren Story/Strong Agronomy; NR-C-0066

Jacob McCuen/McCuen Management; NR-0067