This Order is issued to Raymond Lawrence and Cindy Lawrence (hereafter referred to as Dischargers) based on provisions of Water Code section 13304, which authorizes the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Water Board or Board) to issue an order requiring the cleanup and abatement of wastes, and Water Code section 13267, which authorizes the Board to require the preparation and submittal of technical and monitoring reports.

The Executive Officer finds, with respect to the Dischargers’ acts, or failure to act, the following:

1. This Order requires the Discharger to clean up and abate the impacts to water quality associated with the discharge of earthen materials, soil, and sediment to a tributary to Willow Creek, a tributary to Montgomery Creek, and thence the Pit River. Willow Creek and Montgomery Creek are considered waters of the state, as well as waters of the United States. The discharges that have occurred, and the threatened discharges that may occur in the future, are the result of the Discharger’s dam construction, extensive grading, watercourse crossing construction, road construction, and improper storage of imported potting soils within and adjacent to an unnamed class III tributary to Willow Creek. The Discharger created dams and ponds, built access roads, graded and stripped areas of natural vegetation, and constructed watercourse crossings presumably in support of marijuana cultivation. This Order requires investigation and cleanup in compliance with the Water Code, the Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins, Fourth Addition, revised April 2016 (Basin Plan), State Water Resources Control Board Resolution No. 92-49, Policies and Procedures for Investigation and Cleanup and Abatement of Discharges under Water Code Section 13304 (Resolution 92-49), and other applicable State and Regional Water Board plans, policies, and regulations.

2. The Dischargers, as the property owners and the person and/or persons discharging or creating a threat of discharge, are responsible parties for the purposes of this Order.

   a. Per records from the Shasta County Assessor-Recorder’s Office, the Dischargers purchased the 7.320 acre parcel identified as Assessor Parcel Number (APN) 029-530-012-000 in November 2011 and purchased the 7.290 acre parcel identified as APN 029-530-013-000 in April 2009 (both parcels are hereafter collectively referred to as the Site). The Dischargers have retained ownership of the Site since purchasing the parcels.

   b. Historical Google Earth and NAIP imagery indicates that the Site was undeveloped as of 25 June 2006.
c. The Central Valley Water Board and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) staffs conducted a Site inspection on 26 February 2016. Staff from both agencies found that the Site had been significantly modified, as described in a joint inspection report (Attachment 1).

3. There are no statements or applications on file with the State Water Resources Control Board’s Division of Water Rights for water storage or diversion for the Site. The Site has no prior regulatory oversight or history with the Central Valley Water Board.

4. The Site is located near Bakus Road in the Montgomery Creek community, central Shasta County, Section 1, Township 34N, Range 1W, MDB&M; in the vicinity of latitude 40.829559° N and longitude 121.917233° W.

5. The Site sits above Willow Creek that is tributary to Montgomery Creek. An unnamed tributary (Main Tributary) carries storm water runoff from the Site to Willow Creek. The main source of Site runoff initiates as sheet flow from the highest slopes on Site and concentrates into the Main Tributary. The Main Tributary then discharges to Willow Creek. The confluence of the Main Tributary and Willow Creek lies approximately at latitude 40.826648° N and longitude 121.931839° W – roughly 0.88 miles south west of the Site.

6. The following describes the initial discovery of the water quality concerns at the Site and the findings of the joint investigation of the Central Valley Water Board and CDFW.

a. In January 2016, Marc Pelote with Shasta County Code Enforcement spoke with Central Valley Water Board staff regarding a recent inspection Mr. Pelote conducted at the Site. Mr. Pelote documented various grading and trash accumulation violations on the Site. In addition to the grading violations, Mr. Pelote noted the presence of a failing dam, watercourse crossing construction, and road construction that, in Mr. Pelote’s opinion, presented water quality risks to an unnamed tributary to Willow Creek. Descriptions of these conditions and the threats they posed to degradation of water quality at the Site were given as cause for a follow up on-site inspection involving Central Valley Water Board and CDFW staffs.

b. On 29 January 2016, Central Valley Water Board staff (Staff) attempted to contact Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence to discuss the Site. The listed phone number for Mr. Lawrence was not functioning. Staff then called Mrs. Lawrence and left a voice mail asking for Mrs. Lawrence to contact Staff regarding the possible water quality concerns at the Site. Staff did not receive a phone call back to discuss the Site and therefore, based upon the nature of water quality concerns at the Site, Staff proceeded to obtain an inspection warrant to inspect the Site. Collection of water samples, soil samples, GPS data, photographs, measurement of pumping rate if extant, physical measurements and descriptions and collection of statements by the Site owners or operators were allowed under the inspection warrant. Due to security concerns for Staff, forcible entry to the Site, inspection of the Site without 24-hour notice, and inspection of the Site in the absence of the land owners was permitted by the inspection warrant.

c. As documented in the attached Lawrence Inspection Report (Attachment 1), on 26 February 2016, Staff inspected the Site and observed two earthen dams located on the Main Tributary, road construction, a graded area, a watercourse crossing, improper storage of imported potting soils, and evidence of prior marijuana
cultivation. There was no evidence of erosion control practices being implemented at the Site.

d. The native soil at the Site, as identified using the USDA Web Soil Survey, is classified as Cohasset stony loam (CmD) – well drained soil with medium runoff rates.

e. During the Site inspection, Board Staff documented that two dams had been constructed on the Main Tributary. The dams served to pond water and store water for an unknown use. As of the day of inspection, both dams showed evidence of overtopping and failing, resulting in the discharge of wastes to waters of the state. In total, Staff calculated that approximately 155 cubic yards of earthen material had previously discharged to the Main Tributary. As of the day of inspection, an additional approximately 1405 cubic yards of earthen materials remained at risk of failure and discharge to the Main Tributary.

i. Staff documented dam construction on the Main Tributary on APN 029-530-012-000. Damming of the Main Tributary at this location created Pond 1, identified in the attached inspection report. Construction of the dam has resulted in the deposition of approximately 1500 cubic yards of earthen fill material within the Main Tributary. Subsequent to construction of the dam, evidence documented during the Site inspection suggests that the dam has overtopped and failed, resulting in the discharge of approximately 131 cubic yards of earthen fill material into the Main Tributary.

ii. Staff also documented dam construction on the Main Tributary on APN 029-530-013-000. Damming of the Main Tributary at this location created Pond 2, identified in the attached inspection report. Construction of the dam has resulted in the deposition of approximately 60 cubic yards of earthen fill material within the Main Tributary. Subsequent to construction of the dam, evidence documented during the Site inspection suggests that the dam has overtopped and failed, resulting in the discharge of approximately 24 cubic yards of earthen fill material into the Main Tributary.

f. Staff documented erosional issues and evidence of sediment discharge to the Main Tributary from several access roads at the Site. Rill and gully erosion of the earthen road materials had previously discharged sediment to the Main Tributary and continue to threaten to discharge sediment to the Main Tributary.

g. On APN 029-530-012-000, Staff documented a large graded area measured to be approximately 0.1823 acres in size. The graded area was stripped of vegetation and the bare soil was left exposed to erosional forces. On the day of inspection, Staff documented rill and gully erosion beginning at the graded area and eventually discharging the eroded sediment to the Main Tributary.

h. Staff documented a former cultivation area on APN 029-530-012-000 in close proximity to the Main Tributary. Several planting sacks filled with imported potting soil were located in the cultivation area, in addition to potting soil deposited directly on the ground surface. The area upon which the imported potting soil is located slopes gently towards the Main Tributary and is directly adjacent to the Main
Tributary. Due to the drainage and proximity to the Main Tributary, the imported potting soils pose a threat of discharge to the Main Tributary.

i. Grading and road construction at the Site has resulted in the ground surface being stripped of vegetation and the upper soils lying vulnerable to wind and water erosion. Watercourse crossing construction has led to the deposition of earthen materials directly into the Main Tributary. The dam construction, grading, road construction, and watercourse crossing construction have discharged sediment and create threats of future sediment discharge to the Main Tributary and to Willow Creek. Excessive suspended sediment and increased turbidity can impair water quality and aquatic life.

j. A ford-style watercourse crossing was documented on APN 029-530-013-000. The ford-style watercourse crossing does not utilize any type of culvert or other device to pass flows under the road surface, and instead allows for the passage of vehicles through the active channel. Due to this type of design, in combination with steep road approaches on both the north and south of the Main Tributary, earthen road fill material has been discharged to the Main Tributary and continues to threaten to discharge road fill material into the Main Tributary.

7. The Basin Plan designates beneficial uses, establishes water quality objectives, contains implementation programs for achieving objectives, and incorporates by reference plans and policies adopted by the State Water Resources Control Board.

a. Willow Creek is tributary to Montgomery Creek and thence the Pit River. Existing and potential beneficial uses for the Pit River include the following: Municipal and Domestic Supply (MUN), Irrigation and Stock Watering (AGR), Power (POW), Contact and Canoeing and Rafting Recreation (REC-1), Other Noncontact Recreation (REC-2), Cold Freshwater Habitat (COLD), Warm and Cold Spawning (SPWN), and Wildlife Habitat (WILD). Potential beneficial uses are as follows: Warm Freshwater Habitat (WARM). Beneficial uses of any specifically identified water body generally apply to all of its tributaries.

b. The Pit River is listed on the Clean Water Act 303(d) list as an impaired water body, thus requiring greater protections to improve water quality to meet state water quality standards.

c. The designated beneficial uses of the underlying groundwater include municipal and domestic supply (MUN); agricultural supply (AGR); industrial service supply (IND); and industrial process supply (PRO).

d. The Basin Plan lists specific water quality objectives for inland surface waters. These objectives include in part, limitations on increased temperature, sediment, settleable and suspended material, and turbidity.

8. The State Water Board has adopted Resolution 92-49, which is included as Appendix 9 of the Basin Plan. Resolution 92-49 sets forth the policies and procedures to be used during an investigation and cleanup of a polluted site, and requires that cleanup levels be consistent with State Water Board Resolution No. 68-16, the Statement of Policy with Respect to Maintaining High Quality Waters in California (Resolution 68-16). Resolution 92-49 requires the waste to be cleaned up in a manner that promotes attainment of either background water quality, or the best water quality which is reasonable, if background
levels of water quality cannot be restored. Any alternative cleanup level to background must: (1) be consistent with the maximum benefit to the people of the state; (2) not unreasonably affect present and anticipated beneficial use of such water; and (3) not result in water quality less than that prescribed in the Basin Plan and applicable Water Quality Control Plans and Policies of the State Water Board. Resolution 92-49 directs that investigations proceed in a progressive sequence. To the extent practical, it directs the Regional Water Board to require and review for adequacy written work plans for each element and phase, and the written reports that describe the results of each phase of the investigation and cleanup.

9. Central Valley Water Board staff determined that the dam construction, grading, road construction, and watercourse crossing construction activities at the Site occurred without coverage under any of the following regulatory permits:
   a. Any waste discharge requirement, conditional waiver, or water quality certification issued by either the Central Valley Water Board or the State Water Board;
   b. A CDFW Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement (1600 Agreement); or

10. “Waste” is defined by Water Code section 13050, subdivision (d) as, sewage and any and all other waste substances, liquid, solid, gaseous, or radioactive, associated with human habitation, or of human or animal origin, or from any producing, manufacturing, or processing operation, including waste placed within containers of whatever nature prior to, and for purposes of, disposal.
    Sediment and sediment-laden storm water, when discharged to waters of the state, is deemed a “waste” as defined in Water Code section 13050.

11. “Pollution” is defined by Water Code section 13050, subdivision (l)(1) as, an alteration of the quality of the waters of the state by waste to a degree which unreasonably affects either of the following:
    i. The waters for beneficial uses;
    ii. Facilities which serve these beneficial uses

The dam construction, road construction, watercourse crossing construction, grading, and improper storage of imported potting soil conducted by the Discharger has resulted in the unauthorized discharge or threat of discharge of wastes into surface waters and surface water drainage courses and have created, or threaten to create, a condition of pollution by unreasonably affecting the beneficial uses of waters of the state. The Site’s tributary drainage empties into Willow Creek, a tributary to Montgomery Creek and thence the Pit River. Accordingly, the beneficial uses of the Pit River discussed above in paragraph No. 6 also apply to all of its tributaries.

Discharges of sediment and other inert material alter the hydrologic and sediment transport regimes of surface waters by affecting the flow of water and establishment of vegetation. Such changes may lead to adverse conditions such as flooding, increases in suspended sediment and turbidity, accelerated erosion of the adjacent channel bed or banks, and localized accumulation of deleterious materials. Additionally, such discharges
directly threaten habitat for aquatic species dependent upon native sediment and vegetation characteristics (MIGR, SPWN, and WILD). Increased sedimentation and turbidity can result in increased treatment and/or maintenance costs for downstream agricultural and municipal users that withdraw and treat the water (AGR and MUN). Sediment laden storm water discharges to surface waters and the resulting turbidity can also affect the recreational and aesthetic enjoyment of the surface waters (REC-1 and REC-2).

12. Water Code section 13304, subdivision (a) states, in relevant part:

Any person who has discharged or discharges waste into waters of this state in violation of any waste discharge requirements or other order to prohibition issued by a regional board or the state board, or who has caused or permitted, causes or permits, or threatens to cause or permit any waste to be discharged or deposited where it is, or probably will be, discharged into the waters of the state and causes, or threatens to create, a condition of pollution or nuisance, shall upon order of the regional board clean up the waste or abate the effects of the waste, or, in the case of threatened pollution or nuisance, take other necessary remedial action, including, but not limited to, overseeing cleanup and abatement efforts….Upon failure of any person to comply with the cleanup or abatement order, the Attorney General, at the request of the board, shall petition the superior court for that county for the issuance of an injunction requiring the person to comply with the order. In the suit, the court shall have jurisdiction to grant a prohibitory or mandatory injunction, either preliminary or permanent, as the facts may warrant.

The Discharger caused or permitted waste to be discharged or deposited where it will be, or has the potential to be, discharged to surface waters draining to Willow Creek, which is tributary to Montgomery Creek and thence the Pit River, in violation of Water Code sections 13260 and 13376, which creates a condition of pollution subject to this Order in accordance with Water Code section 13304.

12. The federal Clean Water Act exempts return flows from irrigated agriculture from the federal NPDES permitting scheme (33 U.S.C. §1342(l)(1))., and exempts normal farming, silviculture, and ranching activities from the Section 404 Permit/Section 401 Water Quality Certification permitting scheme (33 U.S.C.A. § 1344(f).). Since state law recognizes medical cannabis as an agricultural product (Health & Saf. Code, § 11362.777.), the Board considers cannabis cultivation to be an agricultural activity, and thus exempt from Clean Water Act in the same manner as traditional agriculture. However, the Dischargers’ actions at the Site may have exceeded the scope of the agricultural exemptions, potentially subjecting the Dischargers to liability under the federal Clean Water Act.

13. Untreated storm water and dam fill material from the Site has discharged, and threatens to discharge, sediment into a tributary to Willow Creek. There is a complete lack of sediment control measures at the Site. Cleanup and abatement is necessary to ensure that threatened unauthorized discharges to surface waters or surface water drainage courses originating from the Site are prevented, background water quality levels are restored, and that any impacts to beneficial uses are mitigated. The current condition of pollution and threat of pollution is a priority violation as outlined in the State Water Resources Control Board Water Quality Enforcement Policy (Enforcement Policy) and the issuance of a cleanup and abatement order pursuant to Water Code section 13304 is appropriate and consistent with policies of the Central Valley Water Board.

14. Water Code section 13267, subdivision (a) provides that the Board may investigate the quality of any water of the state within its region in connection with any action relating to
the Basin Plan. Water Code section 13267, subdivision (b) provides that the Regional Water Board, in conducting an investigation, may require a discharger to furnish, under penalty of perjury, technical or monitoring program reports. The technical reports required by this Order are necessary to ensure compliance with this Order and to protect the waters of the United States. The technical reports are further necessary to demonstrate that appropriate methods will be used to cleanup waste discharged to surface waters and surface water drainage courses and to ensure that cleanup complies with Basin Plan requirements. In accordance with Water Code section 13267, subdivision (b) the findings in this Order provide the Discharger with a written explanation with regard to the need for remedial action and reports and identify the evidence that supports the requirement to implement clean up and abatement activities and submit the reports. The Discharger named in this Order owns and/or operates the Site from which waste was discharged, and there exists a threat of future discharge, and thus is appropriately responsible for providing the reports.

15. Issuance of this Order is an enforcement action taken by a regulatory agency to enforce the regulatory provisions of the Basin Plan, and is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)(Pub. Resources Code, § 21000 et seq.) in accordance with California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15321. This action may also be considered exempt because it is an action by a regulatory agency for the protection of natural resources (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15307.) and an action by a regulatory agency for the protection of the environment (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15308.). Should additional environmental review be required in connection with future discretionary regulatory actions at this site, the Board may recover the costs associated with preparing and processing environmental documents from the discharger. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21089.)

REQUIRED ACTIONS

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that, pursuant to Water Code sections 13267 and 13304, Raymond Lawrence and Cindy Lawrence (Dischargers) shall cleanup and abate the impacts to water quality associated with the discharge and threatened discharge of earthen materials, soil, and sediment to waters of the state as follows:

1. By 15 August 2016, the Discharger shall submit a proposed Restoration Monitoring and Mitigation Plan (hereafter “RMMP”) to the Board. The plan shall include, but not be limited to:
   a. An assessment of the impacts to tributaries of Willow Creek from the unauthorized activities, to be completed by an appropriately qualified professional.
   b. Plans for Site restoration including how long-term impacts from the Site runoff will be abated (i.e. dam removal or re-construction, re-grading, establishing permanent ground cover, watercourse crossing re-design and re-construction etc.), as well as proposed mitigation to restore beneficial uses and to compensate for and minimize any further impacts to the tributaries of Willow Creek. If the RMMP proposes to re-construct the dams and continue to utilize the dams to store diverted water, the Discharges shall obtain the appropriate water right from the State Water Resources Control Board Division of Water Rights. As discussed in the attached Inspection Report, in the Summary section, the structural integrity of the dams shall be investigated and included as part of the RMMP. Best management practices shall
be applied to all current and planned work associated with construction activities on the Site impacting, or having the potential to impact, Willow Creek and its tributaries. The RMMP shall contain, at a minimum, design specifications and drawings, an implementation schedule, and a monitoring plan. The RMMP shall incorporate the use of appropriate native or endemic species in any re-vegetation efforts. The Site restoration plan, including removal or re-construction of the dams, shall be prepared by an appropriately licensed professional practicing within their area of expertise and experience.

c. The implementation schedule in the RMMP shall include detailed project milestones that take into account the time anticipated to obtain all applicable local, state, and federal permits necessary to fulfill the requirements of this Order. The time for providing that notice and obtaining that agreement should be considered and accounted for when developing a RMMP that complies with the deadlines provided in this Order.

2. By 1 September 2016, the Discharger shall begin implementation of the RMMP.

3. By 31 October 2016, the Discharger shall complete all approved restoration and mitigation measures described in the proposed RMMP.

4. By 1 December 2016, the Discharger shall submit a Completion Report for the RMMP to the Board. The Completion Report shall accurately depict all construction and/or mitigation measures and document that the above plan to restore, compensate for, and minimize any further impacts to the tributaries to Cedar Creek and Cedar Creek has been fully implemented.

5. By October 1 of each year (starting 1 October 2017) the Discharger shall submit an annual monitoring report to the Board. The Annual Monitoring Report shall summarize monitoring results of the RMMP and shall continue until at least three years after successful completion of the RMMP, or until a report, acceptable to the Assistant Executive Officer, is submitted showing the Discharger has met the requirements of the RMMP.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS AND NOTICES

6. All technical reports required herein that involve planning, investigation, evaluation, or design, or other work requiring interpretation and proper application of engineering or geologic sciences, shall be prepared by or under the direction of persons registered to practice in California pursuant to California Business and Professions Code sections 6735, 7835, and 7835.1. As required by these laws, completed technical reports must bear the signature(s) and seal(s) of the registered professional(s) in a manner such that all work can be clearly attributed to the professional responsible for the work.

7. All technical reports submitted by the Discharger shall include a cover letter signed by the Discharger, or a duly authorized representative, certifying under penalty of law that the signer has examined and is familiar with the report and that to their knowledge, the report is true, complete, and accurate. The Discharger shall also state if it agrees with any recommendations/proposals and whether it approves implementation of said proposals. Any person signing a document submitted under this Order shall make the following certification:
“I certify under penalty of law that I have personally examined and am familiar with the information submitted in this document and all attachments and that, based on my knowledge and on my inquiry of those individuals immediately responsible for obtaining the information, I believe that the information is true, accurate, and complete. I am aware that there are significant penalties for submitting false information, including the possibility of fine and imprisonment.”

8. The Discharger or their authorized agent(s) shall notify Central Valley Water Board staff at least 48 hours prior to any onsite work, testing, or sampling that pertains to environmental remediation and investigation and is not routine monitoring, maintenance, or inspection or that has not been fully described in the RMMP.

9. The Discharger shall file a written report on any changes in the Site’s ownership or occupancy. This report shall be filed with the Central Valley Water Board no later than 30 days prior to a planned change and shall reference the number of this Order.

10. All monitoring reports, technical reports and notices required under this Order shall be submitted to:

   Griffin Perea
   364 Knollcrest Dr., Ste. 205
   Redding, CA 96002
   (530) 224-3217

11. The Discharger shall obtain all applicable local, state, and federal permits necessary to fulfill the requirements of this Order prior to beginning the work. For example, California Fish and Game Code (FGC) section 1602 requires a person or entity to notify CDFW before: 1) substantially diverting or obstructing the natural flow of a river, stream, or lake; 2) substantially changing the bed, channel, or bank of a river, stream, or lake; 3) using any material from the bed, channel, or bank of a river, stream, or lake; and/or 4) depositing or disposing of debris, waste, material containing crumbled, flaked, or ground pavement where it may pass into a river, stream, or lake. The failure to notify CDFW constitutes a violation of FGC section 1602.

12. Pursuant to Water code section 13304, the Board is entitled to, and may seek reimbursement for, all reasonable costs it actually incurs investigating and abating the effects of the unauthorized discharges of waste and to oversee/supervise the cleanup of such waste, or other remedial action, required by this Order. The Discharger shall enroll in the State Water Board’s Cost Recovery Program and shall reimburse the State of California for all reasonable costs actually incurred by the Regional Board.

13. If for any reason, the Discharger is unable to perform any activity or submit any document in compliance with the schedule set forth herein, or in compliance with any work schedule submitted pursuant to this Order and approved by the Assistant Executive Officer, the Discharger may request, in writing, an extension of the time specified. The extension request shall include justification for the delay. Any extension request shall be submitted as soon as a delay is recognized and prior to the compliance date. An extension may be granted by revision of this Order or by a letter from the Assistant Executive Officer. The Board acknowledges that local, state, and federal permits may cause a delay beyond the control of the Discharger and will take all the available relevant facts into consideration when considering whether or not to grant an extension request.
If, in the opinion of the Assistant Executive Officer, the Discharger fails to comply with the provisions of this Order, the Assistant Executive Officer may refer this matter to the Attorney General for judicial enforcement, may issue a complaint for administrative civil liability, or may take other enforcement actions. Failure to comply with this Order may result in the assessment of Administrative Civil Liability of up to $10,000 per violation, per day, depending on the violation, pursuant to the Water Code, including sections 13268, 13350 and 13385. The Central Valley Water Board reserves its right to take any enforcement actions authorized by law.

Any person aggrieved by this action of the Central Valley Water Board may petition the State Water Board to review the action in accordance with Water Code section 13320 and California Code of Regulations, title 23, sections 2050 and following. The State Water Board must receive the petition by 5:00 p.m., 30 days after the date of this Order, except that if the thirtieth day following the date of this Order falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or state holiday, the petition must be received by the State Water Board by 5:00 p.m. on the next business day. Copies of the law and regulations applicable to filing petitions may be found on the Internet at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/public_notices/petitions/water_quality

or will be provided upon request.

This Order is effective upon the date of signature.

Pamela C. Creedon, Executive Officer

July 13, 2016
(Date)

Attachment 1 – 26 February 2016, Lawrence Inspection Report