

Cannabis Cultivation Waste Discharge Regulatory Program

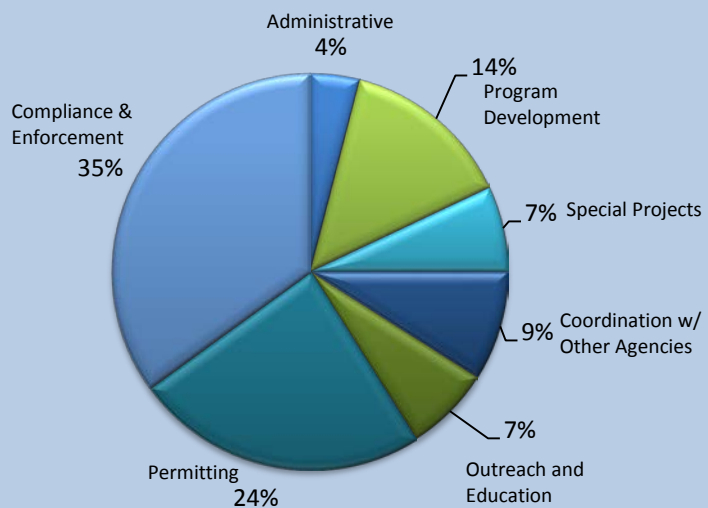
Overview

The Cannabis Cultivation Waste Discharge Regulatory Program was formed in 2014, when resources were allocated to both the Water Boards and the Department of Fish & Wildlife, to reduce the environmental damage caused by cannabis cultivation. California residents passed Proposition 215, the California Compassionate Use Act, in 1996. Since that time, cannabis cultivation has increased exponentially straining law enforcement, local governments, wildlife, and water resources. The resources allocated in 2014 were used to create a multi-disciplinary Marijuana Task Force (Pilot Program), and to implement a priority-driven approach to address the natural resources damages resulting from marijuana cultivation on private lands and state owned lands of high conservation value in northern California. Additionally, in 2016 California residents passed Proposition 64, which created a legal avenue for both medical and recreational cannabis cultivation state wide.

In 2016 and 2017, the Program expanded when the Water Boards and Department of Fish & Wildlife each received additional positions. Currently the Central Valley Water Board has five positions assigned to the Redding office and one to the Rancho Cordova office. Program resources are currently focused on improving process efficiency; enrolling cultivators in the Board's *General Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges of Waste Associated with Medicinal Cannabis Cultivation Activities* (WDRs); and pursuing enforcement actions where necessary.

Primary concerns associated with cannabis cultivation include illicit grading activity, illegal water diversion, and chemical/nutrient transport to waters of the state.

Current Resource Distribution



Program Goals

- 1) Development of a regulatory program;
- 2) Targeted enforcement in high value watersheds;
- 3) Education and outreach to cultivators about best management practices; and
- 4) Multi-agency coordination at the state and local level.

Accomplishments FY 2016-2017

Performance Targets	Target	Accomplished
Compliance and Enforcement Inspections	32	9
Enrollment Inspections	32	3
Outreach and Education Workshops	18	17
General Order Enrollments	150	558

Priority Projects	Status
Develop program File Management/CIWQS/ECM procedures	Ongoing
Develop Enrollment Enforcement Strategy for EMG approval	Completed draft, pending final review
Updates to the Strategic Plan	Ongoing, expected completion FY 17/18
Cannabis Identification & Prioritization System	Funded FY 16/17, Implementation FY 17/18
Anadromous Fisheries Restoration Project Study	Ongoing, final report anticipated 2018

Priority Projects FY 2017-2018

Transition to Statewide General Order:

State Water Board staff have developed a Statewide General Order of WDR for cannabis cultivation for Board consideration in October 2017. Central Valley Water Board staff have assisted the State Water Board in this effort. Should the Order be adopted, Central Valley Water Board staff will need to transition existing permittees to the statewide General Order; extensive outreach and education will be conducted during the transition period.

Strategic Plan Updates:

The program's strategic plan was developed in 2013/2014. Since that time, numerous changes to the program have occurred due to passage of new legislation and the expansion of the program statewide. Staff will work with the State and Regional Boards to update the strategic plan to incorporate necessary changes and to promote consistency within the statewide Cannabis Program.

Hiring and Training New Staffs:

The Cannabis Program experienced numerous staffing changes in 2016/2017 and will be receiving 10 new cannabis positions in FY 2017/2018. Hiring and training new staff requires significant time commitments from both management and existing staff, and has therefore been identified as a priority project.

Program Manual/Onboarding:

Preparation of a Program Manual has been identified as a Priority Project for FY 2017/2018.

Program Priorities FY 2017-2018:

- Develop program File Management/CIWQS/ECM procedures
- Reduce Enforcement Case Backlog
- Present an Enrollment Enforcement Strategy to the Executive Management Group for consideration
- Complete updates to the Cannabis Identification and Prioritization System
- Continue work with the Department of Fish and Wildlife on a cannabis related Anadromous Fisheries Restoration Project Study

Performance Targets FY 2017-2018

	Target
Compliance and Enforcement Inspections	20
Enrollment Inspections	32
Outreach and Education Workshops	18
General Order Enrollments	150