

North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

**Christopher Blount Property
Inspection Date December 6, 2017
WDID No. 1B171852CHUM**

Assessor's Parcel Number and Location

Humboldt County Assessor's Parcel Number (APN):
208-111-013
Address: 26000 Hwy 36, Bridgeville, Ca
Coordinates: N 40°28'39.60" W 123°45'34.10

Property Ownership & Mailing Address:

Christopher Blount
8306 Fanita Dr
Santee, CA 92071

Watershed

Little Larabee Creek, Van Duzen River

Located in the Bridgeville Hydrologic Subarea of the Van Duzen River Hydrologic Area

Section 303d Listing and Total Maximum Daily Load:

Watershed: Van Duzen River

303(d) Listing: YES; sediment

TMDL: Sediment technical TMDL approved by US EPA December 1999. The TMDL generally emphasized the importance of controlling and reducing the amount of sediment delivery into the watershed in order to protect the "primary beneficial use of concern," in the watershed, salmon and steelhead habitat.

TMDL Implementation: The April 8, 2008, *Regional Water Board Staff Work Plan to Control Excess Sediment in Sediment-Impaired Watersheds*, approved by the RWB on June 12, 2008, indicates in part that staff will "[i]dentify [the] most egregious sources of excess sediment and highest priority sites using aerial and road-based reconnaissance, complaints, staff observations, general knowledge, and other information," with a focus on subwatersheds of the Van Duzen River including Little Larabee Creek, and use progressive enforcement or develop Waste Discharge Requirements or conditional waivers to direct control of excess sediment.

Beneficial Uses of Waters of the Bridgeville Hydrologic Subarea 111.22

MUN; AGR; IND; PROC; GWR; FRESH; NAV; POW; REC-1; REC-2; COMM; WARM;COLD; WILD;RARE; MIGR; SPWN; AQUA

Inspection Details

<p>Date and Time of Inspection: December 6, 2017 ~1-4 PM</p>	<p>Present for Inspection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Boards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Adona White, Water Resource Control Engineer, North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) ○ Ramzi Ibrahim, Environmental Scientist (ES), State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board), Office of Enforcement • California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), Watershed Enforcement Team (WET): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Scott Bauer and Ryan Bourque, Senior Environmental Scientists ○ Steve White and Josh Zulliger, Wardens ○ Other Wardens • Humboldt County <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Karen Quetzel, Department of Planning and Building, Code Enforcement Unit • Humboldt County Sheriff Office <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Kerry Ireland, Humboldt County Sheriff Office ○ Other Sheriff Office personnel
<p>Weather: Sunny and dry, cold</p>	
<p>Inspection access: Search Warrant obtained by CDFW Watershed Enforcement Team from Humboldt County Superior Court</p>	<p>Cause for inspection: Suspected water quality and environmental impacts associated with suspected commercial cannabis cultivation. On November 21, 2017, CDFW wardens conducted a ground reconnaissance of the area. While at a travel trailer, CDFW wardens observed 20+ large Tupperware containers outside the trailer, that were emitting an overwhelming smell of marijuana, suggesting a large quantity of processed marijuana may be stored at the location. The CDFW wardens confirmed Fish and Game Code violations consisting of recent grading near the trailer site and a possible water diversion down slope from the trailer. Google Earth imagery from 2016 depicts at least 4 different cultivation areas, with several roads visible, leading to the southeast.</p>

Inspector's Signature

Adona
White



Digitally signed by
Adona White
Date: 2018.01.17
12:29:33 -08'00'

Adona White, PE, Water Resource Control Engineer

Site Maps

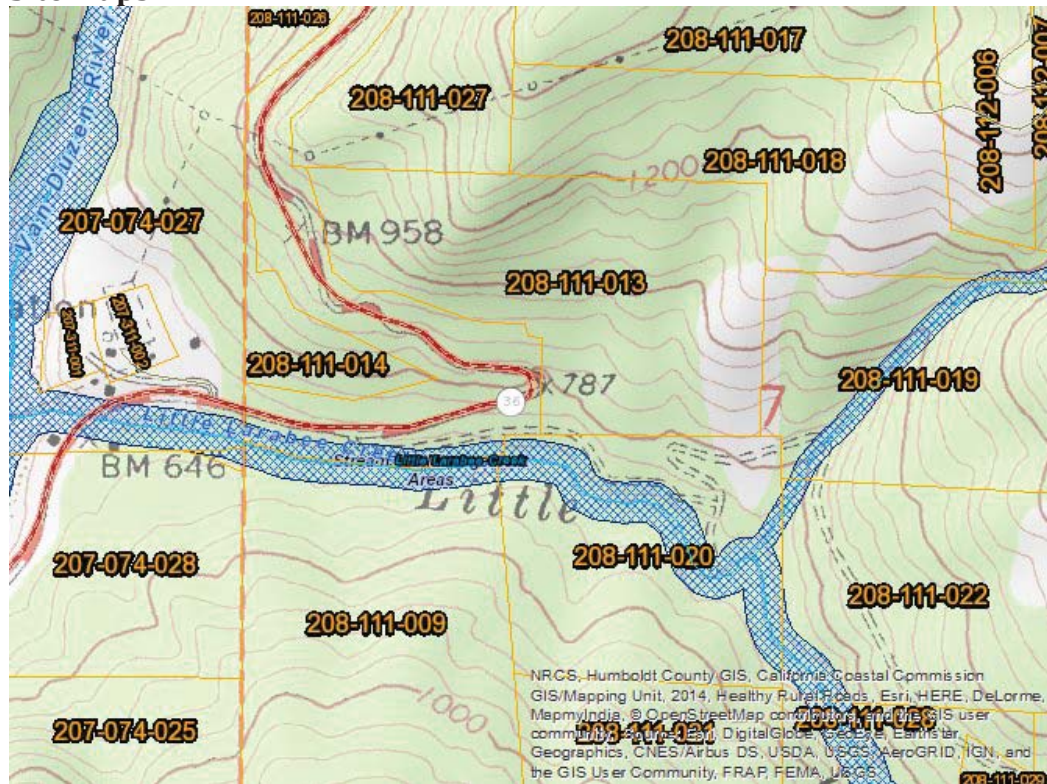


Figure 1. Topography of APN 208-111-013 near the confluence of Little Larabee Creek and the Van Duzen River near State Highway 36, east of Bridgeville.



Figure 2. Aerial imagery of APN 208-111-013 near the confluence of Little Larabee Creek and the Van Duzen River near State Highway 36, east of Bridgeville.

Site Inspection Map



Figure 3. Inspection Map –Blue track identifies inspection route as recorded on Garmin GPS XXX. WQ numbers (WQ-X) indicate a water quality violation or recommendation.

Inspection Observations:

1. The property is bordered on the west by State Highway 36 and on the east by an active landslide. Surface waters on the property include a large class II watercourse and several class II and III watercourses.
2. Graded flats with loose fill, used for cultivation; associated earthen spoils, potting soil spoils, cultivation waste, and plastics located in a location where they can discharge to waters of the state.
 - WQ1 had two greenhouses, each on a flat area graded with side-cast earthen spoils now covered with potting soil spoils, demonstrating visible cracks.
 - WQ2 had one greenhouse with the flat area terminating at a class 2 watercourse where the riparian was cleared to accommodate the cultivation flat.
 - WQ3 was a recently constructed flat area and access road, totaling approximately 0.1 acres of clearing.
 - WQ8 is a flat area constructed near the landslide and is accessed by a steep, rutted, road segment.
 - A flat area with greenhouse is located on the slide and the western portion discharges waste to a class III watercourse (WQ-6) and the eastern portion discharges waste to a class II (WQ-7) located on an actively moving portion of the slide (Lindberg and personal observations)
3. Improperly installed and/or maintained roads and stream crossings on the property, resulting in sediment discharges to watercourses (WQ1, WQ5).

4. No record of correspondence with Regional or State Water Board for regulatory coverage for waste discharges associated with cannabis cultivation.
5. No record of correspondence with Division of Water Rights for regulatory coverage for water diversion or storage (WQ7).

Inspection Findings/Summary:

1. Site development and cannabis cultivation and associated activities do not conform with water quality regulations and has impacted or threatens to impact surface waters and water quality.
2. Cultivation areas encroach on riparian areas and unstable features.

Potential Violations*:

1. Porter Cologne Water Quality Control Act sections 13260, and 13376 – discharge of waste to receiving waters without filing a report of waste discharge.
2. Federal Clean Water Act Sections 301, 404, and 401: disturbance/placement of fill in waters of the United States.
3. Basin Plan Sediment Prohibitions in the *Action Plan for Logging Construction, and Related Activities*: discharges and threatened discharges of earthen and organic material into waters of the state.
4. Order R1-2015-0023/WQ 2017-0023-DWQ: 2,000 square feet or more of cannabis cultivation and discharges/threatened discharges of waste to receiving waters without regulatory coverage.

*this list is a summary of potential violations observed by staff, but may not comprise all water quality violations present on the site.

Recommendations

1. Remove garbage, refuse, and cultivation waste from within 150 feet of surface waters and locations where it can enter or otherwise impact a watercourse.
2. Remove and properly contain/dispose of refuse from throughout the property, including potting soil and cultivation waste (e.g., stems, seedling cubes, grow bags, plastic fencing, dep tarps) from areas with a potential to discharge or blow into to surface waters.
3. Engage appropriately qualified and licensed professional(s) to:
 - a. Evaluate the geological/geotechnical stability of graded flats, their interaction with unstable areas and the potential for waste discharge to surface waters
 - b. Assess the property for controllable sediment discharge sites
 - c. Develop a workplan and schedule to make appropriate corrective measures to prevent/minimize sediment discharges to surface waters and to restore hydrology associated with impacted wetlands throughout the property.

Inspection Photos



Figure 4. At WQ-1, a flat was developed for cannabis cultivation by grading and side casting spoils; the side cast exhibits cracks and threatens to deliver sediment. Cultivation waste, potting soil, and plastic waste is pushed over the side cast fill slope toward a Class II watercourse creating a condition of threatened delivery of waste to surface water.



Figure 5. Cultivation waste pushed over the edge of the flat onto the earthen fill face at WQ-1; waste includes potting soil, plastic netting, stems, and root wads.



Figure 6. Trees adjacent to WQ-1 show evidence of sweeps in their trunks, suggesting ground movement during the life time of the tree.



Figure 7. Class II watercourse located in vicinity of cultivation area at WQ-1 and stream crossing at WQ-4.



Figure 8. Generator and fuel tank located on property near the structure.



Figure 9. Generator and fuel tank located on property near the structure.

greenhouse runoff, potentially including the transport of the chemicals and nutrients used at the greenhouse.



Figure 12. Another greenhouse is located adjacent to the road at WQ-2. Road runoff interacts with greenhouse runoff, potentially including the transport of the chemicals and nutrients used at the greenhouse.



Figure 10. A mini excavator on the property, made by Komatsu Ltd, Model number PC27MP-2, and serial number 15587. The equipment was likely used in the recent earthwork observed on the property.



Figure 13. Cultivation waste pushed over edge



Figure 11. Another greenhouse is located adjacent to the road at WQ-2. Road runoff interacts with



Figure 14. As seen from the road near WQ-5 (near view), it appears that side cast earthen material from the flat at WQ-2 (far view) has been pushed into the watercourse (middle view).

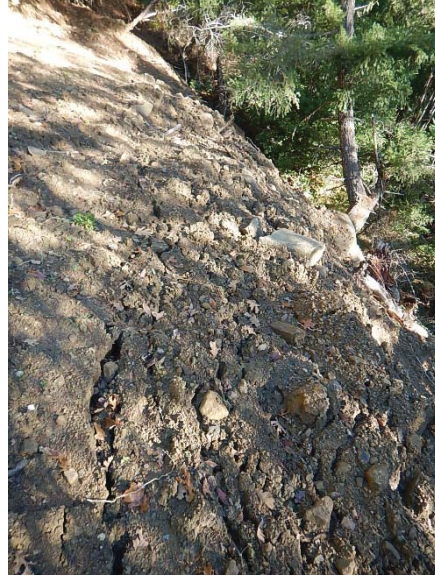


Figure 17. Loose side-cast fill at WQ-3.



Figure 15. WQ-3 recently constructed flat.



Figure 18. Loose, side-cast fill at WQ-3



Figure 16. WQ-3. Freshly side-cast fill placed on already sweeping trees at WQ-3.



Figure 19. WQ-7 flat has a size of 0.08 acres.



Figure 20. WQ-8 with erosion, transport, and delivery of sediment and cultivation-related potting soil to watercourses from both ends of the 0.11 acre flat. The greenhouse is oriented approximately east-west.



Figure 23. The western edge of the flat is a sediment source that is actively eroding, transporting, and delivering sediment to a class III watercourse located to the south (WQ-6)



Figure 21. The western edge of the flat is a sediment source that is actively eroding, transporting, and delivering sediment to a class III watercourse located to the south (WQ-6)



Figure 24. Emergent water visible in the cutbank of the flat between WQ-6 & WQ-7. The cutbank was approximately 8 feet high.



Figure 22. The western edge of the flat is a sediment source that is actively eroding, transporting, and delivering sediment to a class III watercourse located to the south (WQ-6)



Figure 25. Concentrated water visible on the flat between WQ-6 & WQ-7.



Figure 26. The flat between WQ-6 & WQ-7 is constructed with earthen material that has been pushed over the break in slope and within 20 feet of a class II watercourse associated with the slide.

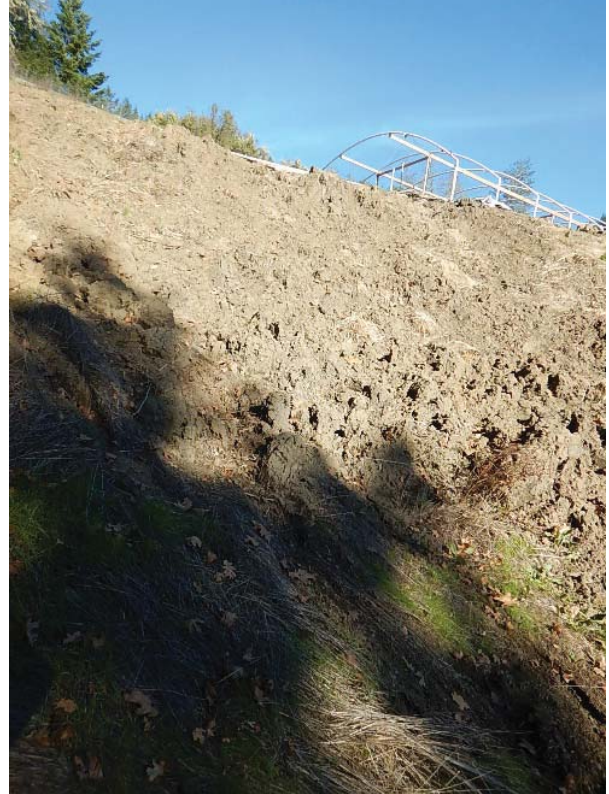


Figure 29. Fill failure along the southern side of the flat, extending into the greenhouse.



Figure 27. At WQ-7, the flat is constructed with the edge of the fill pushed within 20 feet of a class II watercourse associated with the slide.



Figure 30. Another view of the fill failure along the southern side of.



Figure 28. Fill failure along the southern side of the flat; this extends into greenhouse indicating potential discharge of potting soil and residual nutrients and chemicals.



Figure 31. 8300 square feet of outdoor cultivation was located in the power line corridor at WQ-9.



Figure 32. 8300 square feet of outdoor cultivation was located in the power line corridor at WQ-9.