
North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

February 21, 2020

Certified Mail No. 7016 2710 0000 2653 3463

Attn: Cheryl Miranda
Agent for Service of Process
AJT Strategies
27450 Ynez Road, Ste. 228
Temecula, CA 92591

Dear Ms. Miranda:

Subject: Notice of Violation, Directive to Obtain Regulatory Coverage for Cannabis Cultivation, and Transmittal of Inspection Report for September 18, 2019 Inspection of Humboldt County Assessor's Parcel No. 211-361-007-000

File: Cannabis Program Inspections, Humboldt County, September 2019
HCSO/Green Wave Humboldt County Inspections, Paul Thompson,
CIWQS Place ID 861375

This letter is to notify you of observed violations of the requirements listed below for unauthorized discharges to waters of the state from the above-referenced parcel (Property):

California Water Code (Water Code) sections 13260 and 13264

This letter directs you, within 30 days, to take action to comply with Water Code 13260. In addition, this letter directs you, within 30 days, to contact Regional Water Board staff to advise of your plan to implement recommendations in the attached report.

Background

On September 18, 2019, staff from the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board), accompanied by personnel from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), State Water Resources Control Board Division of Water Rights, California Department of Food and Agriculture CalCannabis and various law enforcement agencies, inspected the subject Property. The purpose of the inspection was to evaluate onsite development and conditions, and to identify and assess any impacts or threatened impacts to the quality and beneficial uses of waters of the state.

Attached is a copy of the water quality inspection report (September 18, 2019 Inspection Report). Please review the inspection report carefully and completely. The

VALERIE L. QUINTO, CHAIR | MATTHIAS ST. JOHN, EXECUTIVE OFFICER

inspection report contains recommendations for correcting observed violations and water quality concerns observed on the Property and advises you of the Regional Water Board permits necessary for instream work and projects/activities that result in discharges of waste to receiving waters.

Relevant Requirements

During the inspection, Regional Water Board staff observed features and conditions on the Property that represent violations of water quality requirements and regulations. Attachment A – Regulatory Citations, provides references to these requirements and regulations.

Observed Violations

As documented in the inspection report, Regional Water Board staff observed cannabis cultivation and associated site disturbance of sufficient size and scope to require regulatory coverage under State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) Order No. WQ-2019-0001-DWQ, *General Waste Discharge Requirements and Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges of Waste Associated with Cannabis Cultivation Activities* (Statewide General Order). The Regional Water Board has no record of this Property's enrollment under the Statewide General Order. Outdoor cannabis cultivation activities in California with land disturbance of 2,000 square feet or more that are not enrolled for coverage under the Statewide General Order or individual waste discharge requirements violate Water Code section 13260.

Additional Potential Liabilities

The Regional Water Board is in the process of considering whether the violations of the Water Code and the Basin Plan warrant further enforcement. We encourage you to take steps, to correct the violations as soon as possible, securing any applicable permits from this and other agencies prior to conducting work. Please note that the existing conditions, as observed and documented in the Inspection Report, may represent continuing violations of the Water Code and the Basin Plan.

Please note that correcting the conditions of non-compliance at the Property does not preclude enforcement for the violations alleged in this notice. As noted above, the Regional Water Board reserves its right to fully enforce the law against any violation and threatened violation by taking enforcement actions such as a cleanup and abatement order, time schedule order, administrative civil liabilities, and referral to the California Attorney General's office. Administrative civil liabilities may be assessed on a daily basis in the amount up to \$5,000 for each day the violation occurs or up to \$10 per gallon, but not both pursuant to Water Code section 13350.

Directive to Obtain Regulatory Coverage

Based on the observations detailed in the attached inspection report, and mentioned above, the Regional Water Board has determined that you are required to comply with Water Code section 13260 by taking one of the following actions within **30 calendar days of this letter**:

- 1) Enroll the property under the Statewide General Order by providing the information required in the online application process. The application can be accessed at: <https://public2.waterboards.ca.gov/cgo> You must also submit an application fee to the State Water Board within 30 days of submitting the online application. The fee must be submitted to one of the following addresses, based on the method of delivery.

By U.S. Mail: Accounting Office Attn: Water Quality Fees – Cannabis General Order P.O. Box 1888 Sacramento, CA 95812-1888	In person or by courier delivery: Accounting Office Attn: Water Quality Fees – Cannabis General Order 1001 I Street Sacramento, CA 95814
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- 2) File a Report of Waste Discharge in order to obtain individual Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) specific to your property.

Please submit the appropriate documents and payments to:

North Coast Water Board
Attn: Diana Henriouille
Cannabis Waste Discharge Regulatory Program
5550 Skylane Boulevard, Suite A
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

OR

- 3) If you believe regulatory coverage is not required under any of the options listed above, either because **there is no cultivation** or associated activities occurring, or because the operations that are occurring are not subject to regulation under the Statewide General Order or individual WDRs, please **provide a written response** explaining your non-applicability (with all supporting documentation including photos if necessary) to the Regional Water Board at the address provided above. Regional Water Board staff may contact you to verify your response.

Water Code section 13260 states, in relevant part:

(a) Each of the following persons shall file with the appropriate regional board a report of the discharge, containing the information which may be required by the regional board:

- (1) Any person discharging waste, or proposing to discharge waste, within any region that could affect the quality of the waters of the state, other than into a community sewer system.

Water Code section 13264 states, in relevant part:

(a) No person shall initiate any new discharge of waste or make any material changes in any discharge...prior to the filing of the report required by Section 13260 and no person shall take any of these actions after filing the report but before whichever of the following occurs first:

- (1) The issuance of waste discharge requirements pursuant to Section 13263.
- (2) The expiration of 140 days after compliance with section 13260....
- (3) The issuance of a waiver pursuant to section 13269.

Failure to comply with Water Code sections 13260 and 13264 may result in an administrative civil liability under Water code sections 13261 and 13265 not to exceed \$1,000 per violation for each day in which each violation occurs.

Inspection Report Recommendations

As mentioned above, the September 18, 2019 Inspection Report provides recommendations to correct violations, as well as to address features and conditions that threaten to impact water quality. **Within 30 days of this letter**, please advise Brian Fuller of your intentions, plan, and schedule to implement recommendations in the inspection report. Brian Fuller can be reached at (707) 576-2806 or by email at Brian.Fuller@waterboards.ca.gov.

Future correspondence regarding this matter will be sent to you at this address unless an alternative address is provided to the Regional Water Board. Failure to accept mail from the Regional Water Board is not a valid excuse for non-compliance with any future enforcement orders, and a failure to respond or otherwise appear at a future enforcement proceeding could subject you to a default order and the imposition of administrative civil liability.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Brian Fuller at the phone number or email above. You may also contact me at Diana.Henriouille@waterboards.ca.gov or by phone at (707) 576-2350. Additionally, we are available to meet with you if you wish to discuss this letter, in inspection report, or our waste discharge regulatory programs in further detail.

Sincerely,

Diana Henriouille, P.E.
Enforcement Unit

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Attachments: Attachment A – Regulatory Citations
Water Quality Report of September 18, 2019 Inspection

cc: Department of Fish and Wildlife

Kalyn Bocast, Kalyn.Bocast@wildlife.ca.gov

Humboldt County Planning and Building Department

Robert Russell, RRussell@co.humboldt.ca.us

North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

Kason Grady, Kason.Grady@waterboards.ca.gov

Brian Fuller, Brian.Fuller@Waterboards.ca.gov

State Water Resources Control Board Division of Water Rights

Chris Van de Wyngard, Christopher.VandeWyngard@Waterboards.ca.gov

Cann Doan, Cann.Doan@Waterboards.ca.gov

Stormer Feiler, Stormer.Feiler@waterboards.ca.gov

Attachment A – Regulatory Citations

Regulatory Section	Citation
California Water Code Section 13260	<p>“(a) Each of the following persons shall file with the appropriate regional board a report of the discharge, containing the information that may be required by the regional board:</p> <p>(1) A person discharging waste, or proposing to discharge waste, within any region that could affect the quality of the waters of the state, other than into a community sewer system.</p> <p>(2) A person who is a citizen, domiciliary, or political agency or entity of this state discharging waste, or proposing to discharge waste, outside the boundaries of the state in a manner that could affect the quality of the waters of the state within any region.”</p>
California Water Code Section 13261(a)	<p>“A person who fails to furnish a report or pay a fee under Section 13260 when so requested by a regional board is guilty of a misdemeanor and may be liable civilly in accordance with subdivision (b).”</p>
California Water Code Section 13264 (a)	<p>“No person shall initiate any new discharge of waste or make any material changes in any discharge, or initiate a discharge to, make any material changes in a discharge to, or construct, an injection well, prior to the filing of the report required by Section 13260 and no person shall take any of these actions after filing the report but before whichever of the following occurs first:</p> <p>(1) The issuance of waste discharge requirements pursuant to Section 13263.</p> <p>(2) The expiration of 140 days after compliance with Section 13260 if the waste to be discharged does not create or threaten to create a condition of pollution or nuisance and any of the following applies:...</p> <p>(3) The issuance of a waiver pursuant to Section 13269.”</p>

Regulatory Section	Citation
California Water Code Section 13265(a)	“Any person discharging waste in violation of Section 13264, after such violation has been called to his attention in writing by the regional board, is guilty of a misdemeanor and may be liable civilly in accordance with subdivision (b). Each day of such discharge shall constitute a separate offense.”
California Water Code Section 13350	“A person who (1) violates a cease and desist order or cleanup and abatement order hereafter issued, reissued, or amended by a regional board or the state board, or (2) in violation of a waste discharge requirement, waiver condition, certification, or other order or prohibition issued, reissued, or amended by a regional board or the state board, discharges waste, or causes or permits waste to be deposited where it is discharged, into the waters of the state, or (3) causes or permits any oil or any residuary product of petroleum to be deposited in or on any of the waters of the state, except in accordance with waste discharge requirements or other actions or provisions of this division, shall be liable civilly, and remedies may be proposed, in accordance with subdivision (d) or (e).”