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## North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

August 25, 2023

Lor Cheng  
424 Watson St  
Eureka, CA 95501

Dear Lor Cheng:

**Subject: Notice of Violation, Transmittal of Inspection Report for August 2, 2023, Inspection of Trinity County Assessor's Parcel Number 019-330-016, and Requirement to Respond within 30 days**

**File:** Cannabis Program Inspections, Trinity County, August 2, 2023, CIWQS Place ID 850943

### **THIS LETTER REQUIRES THAT YOU ACT WITHIN 30 DAYS**

This letter is to notify you of observed violations of the requirements listed below, and cited in Attachment A, at the property identified as Trinity County Assessor's Parcel Number 019-330-016 (the Property):

1. State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) *Cannabis Cultivation Policy Principals and Guidelines for Cannabis Cultivation* (Cannabis Policy)
2. California Water Code (Water Code) Section 13260 and 13264(a)

According to our records, the cannabis cultivation operation located on this Property is not enrolled for coverage under the State Water Resources Control 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* (Cannabis General Order).

On August 2, 2023, North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) staff inspected the Property and observed cannabis cultivation in grow bags. Within 30 days, please contact Regional Water Board staff to discuss your plan to correct the observed violations.

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HECTOR BEDOLLA, CHAIR | VALERIE QUINTO, EXECUTIVE OFFICER

## **Background**

LandVision records show the Property is owned by Lor Cheng with the last transfer occurring April 11, 2016.

On August 2, 2023, staff from the Regional Water Board, accompanied by staff of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and personnel of various law enforcement agencies, inspected the 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. During the inspection, staff observed cannabis cultivation operations of sufficient size and scope to require regulatory coverage under the Cannabis General Order.

Attached is a copy of the water quality inspection report (Attachment B – Inspection Report and Attachment C – Inspection Photo Log). Please review the inspection report carefully and completely. The inspection report contains recommendations for correcting observed violations 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 identified several features and conditions on the Property that represent violations of water quality requirements and regulations. Attachment A – Regulatory Citations, provides references to these, and related, requirements and regulations.

## **Observed Violations**

As documented in the August 2, 2023, inspection report, Regional Water Board staff observed violations of the State Water Board Cannabis Policy, and of the California Water Code section 13260 and 13264(a).

## **Legal Requirements**

The State Water Board adopted the Cannabis Policy and the Cannabis General Order on October 17, 2017, and updates on February 5, 2019, which remain in effect today. The purpose of the Cannabis Policy is to ensure that the discharge of waste and diversion of water associated with cannabis cultivation does not have a negative impact on water quality, aquatic habitat, riparian habitat, wetlands, and springs. The Cannabis Policy applies to cannabis cultivation activities throughout California including, Commercial Recreational, Commercial Medical, and Personal Use Medical. The Policy does not apply to recreational cannabis cultivation for personal use, which is limited to six plants under the Adult Use of Marijuana Act (Proposition 64, approved by California voters in November 2016).

The Cannabis General Order is the statewide water quality permit that implements the Cannabis Policy through the overarching general Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) in accordance with the California Water Code and is available for eligible cannabis cultivators to enroll under. The Cannabis General Order regulates waste discharges from cultivation sites including sediment, irrigation runoff, fertilizers, pesticides/herbicides, petroleum, agricultural related chemicals, cultivation related waste, and refuse. Threats of waste discharge may be from irrigation runoff, over fertilization, pond failure, road construction, grading activities, domestic and cultivation related waste, refuse placement, etc. All commercial cannabis cultivators must obtain coverage under the Cannabis General Order, including for both indoor and outdoor cultivation.

Cultivation activities on the Property require conformance with the [Cannabis Policy and enrollment under the Cannabis General Order](#). For more information, please visit our website at:  
([https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/water\\_issues/programs/cannabis/](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/water_issues/programs/cannabis/))

The site conditions observed on the Property do not meet the requirements of the Cannabis Policy. Please provide a written response, including photos if relevant, explaining when and how the Property will be restored in compliance with the Policy.

As documented in the inspection report, there is one existing stream crossing that may need to be upgraded, which will require a water quality certification prior to conducting instream work. [The application for the water quality certification](#) for cannabis cultivation-related projects is available here:  
([https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/water\\_issues/programs/cannabis/pdf/200204/RB1\\_Cannabis\\_WQC\\_401\\_App.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/water_issues/programs/cannabis/pdf/200204/RB1_Cannabis_WQC_401_App.pdf))

### **Additional Potential Liabilities**

The Regional Water Board is in the process of considering whether the violations of the Water Code 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.

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.



**cc: North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board**  
[Northcoast.Cannabis@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:Northcoast.Cannabis@waterboards.ca.gov)  
Claudia Villacorta, [Claudia.Villacorta@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:Claudia.Villacorta@waterboards.ca.gov)  
Kason Grady, [Kason.Grady@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:Kason.Grady@waterboards.ca.gov)  
Mona Dougherty, [Mona.Dougherty@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:Mona.Dougherty@waterboards.ca.gov)

**California Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
Ashley Worth, [Ashley.Worth@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:Ashley.Worth@wildlife.ca.gov)  
Jennifer VanDyke, [Jennifer.Vandyke@Wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Vandyke@Wildlife.ca.gov)  
Travis Jarrett, [Travis.Jarrett@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:Travis.Jarrett@wildlife.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 style="padding-left: 40px;">(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 style="padding-left: 40px;">(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: (3) The issuance of waste discharge requirements pursuant to Section 13263. (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:... (3) The issuance of a waiver pursuant to Section 13269.”</p>
Cannabis Policy and General Order No. WQ 2019-0001-DWQ	<p><a href="#">State Water Resources Control Board Cannabis Cultivation Policy</a> and <a href="#">General Waste Discharge Requirements Order No. WQ 2019-0001-DWQ</a> for Discharges of Waste Associated with Cannabis Cultivation Activities            (<a href="https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cannabis/docs/policy/final_cannabis_policy_with_at_tach_a.pdf">https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cannabis/docs/policy/final_cannabis_policy_with_at_tach_a.pdf</a>)            and            (<a href="https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_decisions/adopted_orders/water_quality/2019/wqo2019_0001_dwq.pdf">https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_decisions/adopted_orders/water_quality/2019/wqo2019_0001_dwq.pdf</a>)</p>

## FACILITIES INSPECTION REPORT

Region/Office: 1	Status: Performed	Reg. Measure ID: 453953
Program Type: IRRICANNABIS	WDID:	Order Number:
Scheduled Insp. Date:	Actual Insp. Date: 08/02/2023	

### Discharger Information

Party ID: 563963	Discharger Organization Name: Cheng, Lor		
Address: 424 Watson Street	City, State, Zip: Eureka, CA 95501		
Discharger Contact Person:	Discharger Contact Phone:		
Discharger Contact Email Address:			

### Facility Information

Place ID 850943	Facility Name: Lor Cheng		
Address: 167 Dogwood Court	City, State, Zip: Hayfork, CA 96041		
County: Trinity	Latitude: 40.429608	Longitude: -123.193835	Method: Map Interpolation (digital)

### Lead Inspector Information

Lead Inspector Party ID: 569684	Lead Inspector Name: Katherine Hawken		
Inspector Type:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State	<input type="checkbox"/> State Contractor	<input type="checkbox"/> EPA Contractor
	<input type="checkbox"/> EPA and State (EPA Lead)	<input type="checkbox"/> EPA and State (State Lead)	<input type="checkbox"/> EPA (Regional)

## INSPECTION TYPE

Inspection Type: Miscellaneous inspection

## VIOLATIONS

Were Violations noted during this inspection?  Yes  No

Violation ID	Violation Type	Occurrence Date	Rank	Description
1119480	Other Codes	08/02/2023	B	California Water Code Section 13260 and 13264

### INSPECTION SUMMARY (REQUIRED) (500 character limit)

Observations:  
 I observed a bare dirt access road with ruts (Photo 1). I observed cannabis plants in raised beds on terraces (Photo 2). At the base of the road, I observed accumulated fine sediment and a pile of cannabis plant waste (Photos 3 and 4). I observed fine sediment had discharged to a small stream below the road (Photo 5). I left a field notice on the property with the warrant (Photo 6).

### GENERAL NOTES (OPTIONAL) (2000 character limit)

Recommendations:

1. If you and/or your tenant(s) plan to continue commercial cannabis cultivation, enroll for coverage under the State Water Board’s Order WQ 2019-0023-DWQ, General Waste Discharge Requirements and Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges of Waste Associated with Cannabis Cultivation Activities.
2. Hydrologically disconnect access road from receiving waters. Improve road surfacing to minimize sediment delivery. Install management practices like water bars and rolling dips to dissipate runoff.
3. Stockpile cannabis plant waste upland, outside of the riparian setbacks.

For Internal Use (Optional)					
Reviewed By:	(1)	(2)	(3)		
CIWQS Entry Date:		Regional Board File Number:		CIWQS Inspection ID:	



Lor Cheng Inspection Photo Log  
Photos taken by Kate Hawken on August 2, 2023



Photo 1: Dirt access road with rutting.



Photo 2: Cannabis plants in raised beds on terraces.



Photo 3: Base of dirt road.



Photos 4 and 5: Fine sediment accumulated at base of road, and cannabis plant waste (left). Fine sediment discharging to small stream (right).

**-FIELD NOTICE-  
WATER QUALITY VIOLATIONS**



**NORTH COAST REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD STAFF HAVE OBSERVED CERTAIN VIOLATIONS OF THE CALIFORNIA WATER CODE RELATED TO WATER QUALITY AND CANNABIS CULTIVATION ON THIS PROPERTY.**

**I. Inspection Information**

Date: 8/2/23 Inspector: Kate Hawken  
Owner: Loi Cheng Operator: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ APN: 019-330-016

**II. California Water Code Violations**

- Water Code section 13260. Commercial cannabis cultivation without regulatory coverage, verified through California Integrated Water Quality System (CIWQS) database.
- Water Code 13264. Actual discharges of waste without regulatory coverage or material changes to existing authorized waste discharge activities without regulatory coverage. See Box III.

*Per California Health and Safety Code 11358(d)(3)(B), violation of Water Code sections 13260 or 13264 while cultivating more than six cannabis plants may subject you to imprisonment. Violation of Water Code sections 13260 or 13264 may also subject you to fines of up to \$1,000/day. See reverse for code text.*

**III. Unauthorized or Threatened Discharges to Waters of the State Observed**

Actual Discharge	Threatened Discharge	Brief description and location of actual discharges only:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sediment (roads or disturbed area) <u>base of access road</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Refuse, debris, or household waste _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wastewater _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fertilizers and/or pesticides _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Soils and/or potting material _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Petroleum _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Unauthorized discharges of waste as defined in Water Code section 13050 may subject you to fines of up to \$5,000/day per violation, pursuant to Water Code section 13350. See reverse for code text.*

**IV. Actions to be taken:**

You are hereby provided notice of these violations and the need to resolve them. Please contact Kate Hawken at KATHRINE.HAWKEN @waterboards.ca.gov or (707) 445-6127, within 72 hours to discuss your intentions to correct these violations.

**Please note:** The violations outlined in this notice are not a description of all recorded Water Code violations on the property. You will receive a complete Inspection Report and Notice of Violation in approximately 30 days. Additional actions may also be required to address violations documented by other local or state departments/agencies. You must comply with all applicable requirements for cleanup activities which may require permits. Failure to obtain applicable permits and comply with applicable requirements may subject you to additional violations and enforcement action.

Inspector Signature: Kate Hawken Date: 8/2/23

Delivery Method of Notice: with WARRANT

Photo 6: I left a field notice on the property with the warrant.