

EXHIBIT 1-C

1 FINDINGS OF FACT

1.1 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 Purpose

This statement of Findings of Fact (Findings) and Statement of Overriding Considerations addresses the environmental effects associated with the Sonoma County Comprehensive Cannabis Program Update (Cannabis Program Update). These Findings are made pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Sections 21081, 21081.5, and 21081.6 of the Public Resources Code (PRC) and Sections 15091 and 15093 of the State CEQA Guidelines, Title 14, California Code of Regulations (CCR) Section 15000, et seq. (State CEQA Guidelines). The potentially significant impacts were identified in both the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and the Final EIR, as well as additional facts found in the complete record of proceedings.

PRC Section 21081 and Section 15091 of the State CEQA Guidelines require that the lead agency prepare written findings for identified significant impacts, accompanied by a brief explanation for the rationale for each finding. Sonoma County (County) is the lead agency responsible for preparation of the EIR in compliance with CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines. Section 15091 of the State CEQA Guidelines states, in part, that:

- a) No public agency shall approve or carry out a project for which an EIR has been certified which identifies one or more significant environmental effects of the project unless the public agency makes one or more written findings for each of those significant effects, accompanied by a brief explanation of the rationale for each finding. The possible findings are:
 - 1) Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the final EIR.
 - 2) Such changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and not the agency making the finding. Such changes have been adopted by such other agency or can and should be adopted by such other agency.
 - 3) Specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other considerations, including provision of employment opportunities for highly trained workers, make infeasible the mitigation measures or project alternatives identified in the final EIR.

In accordance with PRC Section 21081 and Section 15093 of the State CEQA Guidelines, whenever significant impacts cannot be mitigated to below a level of significance, the decision-making agency is required to balance, as applicable, the benefits of the proposed project against its unavoidable environmental risks when determining whether to approve the project. If the benefits of a proposed project outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects, the adverse effects may be considered "acceptable." In that case, the decision-making agency may prepare and adopt a Statement of Overriding Considerations, pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines.

Section 15093 of the State CEQA Guidelines state that:

- a) CEQA requires the decision-making agency to balance, as applicable, the economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of a proposed project against its unavoidable environmental risks when determining whether to approve the project. If the specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of a proposed project outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects, the adverse environmental effects may be considered "acceptable."
- b) When the lead agency approves a project which will result in the occurrence of significant effects which are identified in the final EIR but are not avoided or substantially lessened, the agency shall state in writing the

specific reasons to support its action based on the Final EIR and/or other information in the record. The statement of overriding considerations shall be supported by substantial evidence in the record.

- c) If an agency makes a statement of overriding considerations, the statement should be included in the record of the project approval and should be mentioned in the notice of determination. This statement does not substitute for, and shall be in addition to, findings required pursuant to Section 15091.

The Final EIR for the project identified potentially significant effects that could result from project implementation. However, the County Board of Supervisors (Board) finds that the inclusion of certain mitigation measures as part of the project approval will reduce most, but not all, of those effects to less-than-significant levels. Those impacts that are not reduced to less-than-significant levels are identified and overridden due to specific project benefits in a Statement of Overriding Considerations.

In accordance with CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines, the Board adopts these Findings as part of its certification of the Final EIR for the project. Pursuant to PRC Section 21082.1(c)(3), the Board also finds that the Final EIR reflects the Board's independent judgment as the lead agency for the project. As required by CEQA, the Board, in adopting these Findings, also adopts a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) for the project. The Board finds that the MMRP, which is incorporated by reference and made a part of these Findings, meets the requirements of PRC Section 21081.6 by providing for the implementation and monitoring of measures intended to mitigate potentially significant effects of the project.

1.1.2 Organization and Format of Findings

Section 1.1, "Introduction," contains a summary description of the Cannabis Program Update and background facts relative to the environmental review process.

Section 1.2 discusses the CEQA findings of independent judgment.

Section 1.2.1 describes the project's potential environmental effects that were determined to be less than significant and, therefore, do not require mitigation measures.

Section 1.2.2 describes potentially significant effects of the project that would be mitigated to a less-than-significant level with implementation of the identified mitigation measures.

Section 1.2.3 of these Findings identifies the significant impacts of the project that cannot be mitigated to a less than significant level, even though all feasible mitigation measures have been identified and incorporated into the project.

Section 1.3 identifies the feasibility of the project alternatives that were studied in the EIR.

Section 2 contains the general CEQA findings.

Section 3 contains the Statement of Overriding Considerations providing the Board's views on the balance between the project's significant environmental effects and the merits and objectives of the project.

1.1.3 Project Description

The Cannabis Program Update includes amendments to the Sonoma County General Plan and changes to the County Code in Chapter 26 ("Sonoma County Zoning Regulations") and Chapter 4 ("Amusements and Business Regulations") to further address proposed cannabis cultivation and supply chain uses allowed by the state licensing program beyond the current County regulations.

Components proposed in the Cannabis Program Update are described below and consist of the following:

- ▶ amendments to the General Plan;
- ▶ refinements to the Sonoma County Code that regulate cannabis uses;

- ▶ new cannabis regulations to the Sonoma County Code, including setbacks specific to existing permits and applications; and
- ▶ refinements to the Sonoma County Uniform Rules for Agricultural Preserves and Farmland Security Zones (Uniform Rules).

The EIR was prepared to evaluate impacts at a programmatic level consistent with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15168 that may result from enactment and implementation of the Cannabis Program Update ordinance amendments, which include accepting new applications for permitting of preexisting cannabis cultivation operations not previously regulated and new commercial cannabis activities now authorized by the Cannabis Program Update. The EIR assumes that implementation of the ordinance could result in up to 208 acres of new cannabis cultivation and 235 supply chain (noncultivation) cannabis use sites by 2044 (Draft EIR page 2-25).

1.1.4 Environmental Review Process

NOTICE OF PREPARATION

In accordance with CEQA (PRC Section 21092) and the State CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR Section 15082), a notice of preparation (NOP) was distributed on February 6, 2023, to the State Clearinghouse, responsible agencies, interested parties and organizations, and private organizations and individuals that could have interest in the project. A scoping meeting was held March 8, 2023, via a webcast.

DRAFT EIR

On May 19, 2025, the County released the Draft EIR for a 60-day public review and comment period. The Draft EIR was submitted to the State Clearinghouse for distribution to reviewing agencies and posted on the County's website at <https://sonomacounty.gov/administrative-support-and-fiscal-services/county-administrators-office/projects/cannabis-program/cannabis-program-update-and-eir>. The Draft EIR was also made available at the following locations:

- ▶ Permit Sonoma, located at 2550 Ventura Avenue, Santa Rosa, California 95403
- ▶ County Administrator's Office, located at 575 Administration Drive, Room 104A, Santa Rosa, California 95403

A public meeting to provide an overview of the Draft EIR and environmental review process was held before the Sonoma County Planning Commission on June 19, 2025, at the Board of Supervisors Meeting Room 102-A, Sonoma County Administration Building, 575 Administration Drive, Santa Rosa.

FINAL EIR

Section 15088 of the State CEQA Guidelines requires that the lead agency responsible for the preparation of an EIR evaluate comments on environmental issues received during the noticed comment period and prepare written response addressing each of the comments. The intent of the Final EIR is to provide a forum to address comments pertaining to the information and analysis contained within the Draft EIR, and to provide an opportunity for clarifications, corrections, or revisions to the Draft EIR as needed and as appropriate.

The Final EIR assembles in one document all the environmental information and analysis prepared for the proposed project, including comments on the Draft EIR and responses by the County to those comments.

In accordance with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15132, the Final EIR for the proposed project consists of (i) the original Draft EIR; (ii) comments received on the Draft EIR; (iii) a list of the individuals, organizations, and public agencies commenting on the Draft EIR; (iv) written responses to significant environmental issues raised during the public review and comment period and related supporting materials; (v) minor edits and clarifications to the Draft EIR; (vi) Errata to the Final EIR; and (vii) other information contained in the EIR, including EIR appendices.

The Final EIR was released on September 3, 2025, and was made available for review by commenting agencies, in accordance with CEQA requirements. The errata to the Final EIR was issued on October 21, 2025. The Final EIR was also made available to the public online at <https://www.trinitycounty.org/node/2609>.

1.2 CEQA FINDINGS OF INDEPENDENT JUDGMENT

1.2.1 Impacts Identified in the EIR as Less Than Significant for Which no Findings are Required

The Final EIR adopts as its baseline for analysis of impacts the existing environmental conditions that include existing licensed cannabis uses and unregulated cannabis cultivation in remote and environmentally sensitive areas of Sonoma County that unquestionably caused harmful environmental impacts that are documented in the EIR to the extent that adequate data is available. Because these conditions developed without any form of discretionary approval or permit from Sonoma County or other government agency, those illegal activities never received environmental review. As a result of being incorporated into the baseline, those impacts may never receive environmental review, except for those preexisting cannabis activities that elect to participate in the new California legal marketplace through compliance with the Cannabis Program Update. CEQA does not require that baseline illegal activities or other existing conditions be included in the cumulative impact analysis of an EIR; it requires only impacts from past, present, or probable future discretionary projects. Prior illegal activity is not a project for purposes of cumulative impact analysis under CEQA, but is a baseline condition against which the impacts of the project under consideration are assessed (14 CCR Sections 15125, 15130; *Center for Biological Diversity v. Department of Fish and Wildlife* [2015] 234 Cal.App.4th 214, 248–251 [see also cases cited therein]).

The Cannabis Program Update is designed to reduce environmental impacts from those participants with preexisting cultivation operations and from other new commercial cannabis activities to less-than-significant levels. The remaining preexisting cannabis activities that do not elect to participate are illegal and subject to enforcement. Civil and criminal enforcement of laws and ordinances pertaining to illegal cannabis are not a part of the Cannabis Program Update and are categorically exempt from CEQA (14 CCR Section 15321).

The Final EIR identified impacts that are less than significant and do not require any additional mitigation. These impacts are listed and summarized in Draft EIR Table ES-1 (Draft EIR pages ES-8 through ES-78) based on the technical analyses and substantial evidence provided in Draft EIR Sections 3.1 through 3.17 and refined in minor edits in the Final EIR and Errata to the Final EIR. According to the analysis in the Final EIR and evidence in the record, the Board finds that the characterizations in the Final EIR adequately describe the setting and that all impacts have been either correctly identified as addressed by design due to Cannabis Program Update and other existing regulatory requirements or the impact to that particular resource is less than significant related to the project. No mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant.

EVIDENCE

- a) The Final EIR determined that approval of the Cannabis Program Update ordinances would have no impact on the physical environment with respect to Population and Housing or Recreation (Section 1.5 of the Draft EIR). No comments or other evidence has been submitted that disputes or contradicts this determination.
- b) The Final EIR identifies the following impact areas as having a less-than-significant impact on the environment with supporting evidence and analysis in the EIR, summarized in the Draft EIR, Table ES-I (Draft EIR pages ES-8 through ES-78), which is incorporated herein by reference as if set forth in full:
 - i. **Agricultural and Forestry Resources (Impacts 3.2-1, 3.2-2, 3.2-3, and 3.2-4).** Provisions of the Cannabis Program Update would consider cannabis cultivation as an agricultural use and would allow for development of structures to support nonproduction accessory uses, such as manufacturing, retail, and distribution (referred to as supply chain uses), as well as permanent structures for events, which could involve conversion

of farmland to a nonagricultural use. However, potential new developed uses that could be located on farmland would not comprise a substantial area of the county's agricultural resources. Thus, the loss of such a relatively small area would not significantly detract from future agricultural use in the unincorporated area (Impact 3.2-1). In addition, the Cannabis Program Update would define cannabis as controlled agriculture under the General Plan and as an agricultural crop in Section 26-18-020 of the County Code. The Cannabis Program Update would limit the extent of development of structures that support mixed-light and indoor cannabis cultivation to be subordinate (an accessory use) to outdoor agricultural production on the site and would be subject to compliance with General Plan Policies AR-4a through AR-4g as amended by the project.

The proposed updated regulations would complement the County's existing zoning requirements for agricultural uses and Williamson Act contracts and, therefore, would not conflict with existing agricultural zoning (Impact 3.2-2). Uniform Rule Section 7 would be modified to include cannabis cultivation as a qualifying agricultural use. Uniform Rule Section 8.3-B Compatible Uses would be modified to include facilities for cannabis manufacturing of cannabis grown on-site and centralized processing of cannabis grown off-site as compatible agricultural support uses. Consistent with proposed Code Section 26-18-115, accessory uses to cannabis would be directly related and incidental to the primary agricultural use of the land (i.e., cannabis cultivation).

Future cannabis operations would be required to comply with the requirements of the zoning designation as updated by the Cannabis Program Update. Compliance with the development standards established by the Cannabis Program Update would ensure future cannabis operations in the Resources and Rural Development (RRD) zone would not conflict with the zoning requirements. Therefore, implementation of the Cannabis Program Update would not conflict with existing zoning for or cause the rezoning of forest land, timberland, or areas designated for timberland production (Impact 3.2-3). Existing and new licensed commercial cannabis cultivation sites could lead to the clearing of forest areas and conflict with timber production activities; however, compliance with the County's tree protection regulations would ensure future cannabis operations would provide adequate replacement or payment for the removal of any on-site protected trees, including those contained in existing forestland (Impact 3.2-4).

- ii. **Air Quality. (Impacts 3.3-1 and 3.3-3)** Implementation of the Cannabis Program Update would not result in greater emissions than have already been accounted for in the regional emissions modeling used to develop the emissions reduction targets, strategies, and measures of the 2017 Clean Air Plan. Therefore, implementation of the Cannabis Program Update would not obstruct efforts by the Bay Area Air District (Air District) (previously known as the Bay Area Air Quality Management District [BAAQMD]) to attain and maintain the national ambient air quality standards and California ambient air quality standards in the San Francisco Bay Area Air Basin (Impact 3.3-1). Cannabis cultivation sites and associated supply chain uses under the Cannabis Program Update would not generate operational emissions of criteria air pollutants and ozone precursors exceeding the Air Districts average daily mass emissions thresholds of significance. Because operational emissions of criteria air pollutants and ozone precursors from individual cannabis sites would not be greater than the Air District's daily mass emissions threshold (Impact 3.3-3).
- iii. **Biological Resources (Impact 3.4-3).** Individual cannabis projects, approved through the Cannabis Program Update, would have to comply with applicable provisions of the Sonoma County Code, including setbacks, as well as County zoning regulations, which prohibit grading, vegetation removal, agricultural cultivation, development of structures and roads, and other activities in any stream channel or streamside conservation area, which would help protect special-status fisheries and minimize impacts. Cannabis cultivation is also required to follow best management practices (BMPs) for cannabis cultivation, which have requirements regarding water use and storage and prohibit work in the riparian zone (Sonoma County n.d.). In addition, all permitted cannabis cultivation operations are required to comply with the numeric and narrative instream flow requirements for all diversions of surface water and groundwater as part of compliance with Attachment A (Section 3 – Numeric and Narrative Instream Flow Requirements) of State Water Resource Control Board (SWRCB) Order WQ 2023-0102-DWQ (Impact 3.4-3).

- iv. **Cultural Resources (Impact 3.5-3).** Previously undiscovered human remains could be discovered when soils are disturbed during construction of cannabis sites permitted under the proposed Cannabis Program Update. Compliance with Sonoma County Code Sections 11.14.050 and 36.20.040, SWRCB Order WQ 2023-0102-DWQ, Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, and PRC Section 5097 would make this impact less than significant because required notification would occur and any remains that are discovered would be treated appropriately (Impact 3.5-3).
- v. **Energy (Impact 3.6-1).** The energy needs for construction of new cannabis cultivation and supply chain uses would be temporary and would not require additional capacity or increase peak or base period demand for electricity or other forms of energy. New cannabis sites would be built to comply with the California Energy Code in effect at the time of construction and would therefore be more energy efficient than existing cannabis sites because of increasing requirements related to energy efficiency in the building code and in on-road and off-road fuel efficiency. Future cultivation sites (indoor and mixed-light) would also be required to comply with CCR, Title 4, Section 16305, which would reduce energy impacts (Impact 3.6-1).
- vi. **Geology, Soils, and Mineral Resources (Impacts 3.7-1, 3.7-2, and 3.7-3).** Commercial cannabis sites approved under the proposed Cannabis Program Update may be constructed in areas prone to strong seismic shaking. However, such uses would not exacerbate existing seismic hazards and would be required to comply with existing state and local regulatory requirements related to seismic hazards (e.g., building codes and other laws and regulations), such that the exposure of people or structures to risk of loss, injury, or death resulting from rupture of a known earthquake fault or strong seismic shaking would be avoided or reduced (Impact 3.7-1). Cannabis sites permitted under the proposed Cannabis Program Update could result in the development of new facilities, which could include clearing, grading, excavation, and other earthmoving activities. The potential for new or expanded cannabis sites being located on expansive soils, causing substantial soil erosion or resulting in the loss of topsoil from implementation of the project would be addressed through compliance with County Code, Sonoma County's Grading and Drainage Regulation, BMPs for cannabis cultivation, and SWRCB Order WQ 2023-0102-DWQ (Impact 3.7-2). Cannabis sites permitted under the proposed Cannabis Program Update could result in the exposure of people and property to risks associated with unstable soils. However, sites would be required to comply with state and local regulatory requirements (e.g., building codes and other laws and regulations) related to geologic hazards, such that the risk to life or property through exposure to unstable soils because of the project would be reduced (Impact 3.7-3).
- vii. **Hazards and Hazardous Materials (Impacts 3.9-1, 3.9-2, and 3.9-4).** Implementation of the Cannabis Program Update may result in the transportation, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. However, regulatory compliance with established safety regulations designed to protect against significant hazards to public health and well-being would be sufficient to minimize this impact to a less-than-significant level (Impact 3.9-1). Implementation of the Cannabis Program Update would allow for the permitting and development of cannabis uses that would emit or handle hazardous materials, such as pesticides, herbicides, fungicides, rodenticides, and other chemicals for growing, processing, and manufacturing of cannabis and cannabis products within 0.25 miles of an existing or proposed school. However, these hazardous materials would be used in accordance with existing regulatory compliance protocols and thresholds established by state and federal requirements designed to protect against significant hazards to public health and well-being. Additionally, the Cannabis Program Update includes required setbacks from school sites (Impact 3.9-2). Implementation of the Cannabis Program Update may allow for the permitting and development of cannabis uses on sites near airports. However, cannabis uses are required to comply with applicable development standards and land use requirements of the comprehensive airport land use plan, General Plan Air Transportation Element policies, and Federal Aviation Administration notification requirements, as applicable (Impact 3.9-4).
- viii. **Hydrology and Water Quality (Impacts 3.10-1, 3.10-3, and 3.10-4).** Construction and operation of cannabis cultivation and supply chain uses under the proposed Cannabis Program Update have the potential to degrade water quality in various ways. Compliance with relevant water quality regulations and BMPs would

reduce the risk of water degradation from soil erosion and other pollutants related to project construction and operations activities, such as SWRCB Order WQ 2023-0102-DWQ requirements, which address site erosion and sediment control, disturbed areas stabilization, nitrogen management, implementation of best practical treatment or control (BPTC) measures, site closure procedures, and monitoring and reporting requirements. These requirements would ensure that the Cannabis Program Update does not contribute to or exacerbate identified water quality contamination. For these reasons, construction and operation of development approved under the Cannabis Program Update would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade water quality (Impact 3.10-1). Cannabis cultivation sites could divert surface water from county streams and rivers to support water supply demands. Low flows are associated with increased temperature and may also aggravate the effects of water pollution. Compliance with SWRCB Order WQ 2023-0102-DWQ requires that certain flow and gauging requirements be met and that a surface water diversion forbearance period be implemented (Impact 3.10-3). Development and operation of cannabis facilities could affect the peak flow, and volume of stormwater runoff generated from such areas would be affected by development through conversion of vegetated or otherwise pervious surfaces to impervious surfaces (e.g., roads, roofs, driveways, walkways) and by the development of drainage systems that might more effectively connect these impervious surfaces to streams or other water bodies. However, implementation of state and local regulations pertaining to site drainage and erosion would ensure that drainage patterns are not substantially altered (Impact 3.10-4).

- ix. **Land Use and Planning (Impact 3.11-1).** Adoption of the Cannabis Program Update would amend the General Plan and County Code to allow proposed cannabis cultivation and supply chain uses beyond what the current County regulations allow, which could result in an expansion of cultivation and supply chain uses. Adoption and implementation of the Cannabis Program Update would be consistent with General Plan policies related to land use and would incorporate performance standards that implement environmental protections identified in the General Plan policies and Sonoma County Code. The Cannabis Program Update is also consistent with the land use provisions of the Sonoma County Airport Industrial Area Specific Plan, Bennett Valley Area Plan, Franz Valley Area Plan, Penngrove Area Plan, Petaluma Dairy Belt Area Plan, Sonoma Mountain Area Plan, and West Petaluma Area Plan. As a result, conflicts with applicable land use plans, policies, or regulations would be minimized (Impact 3.11-1).
- x. **Noise and Vibration (Impact 3.12-2 and 3.12-3).** Construction activity associated with implementation of the Cannabis Program Update would not require the use of ground vibration-intensive activities, such as pile-driving or blasting. Although bulldozers may be used to prepare sites for development, the associated vibration would not adversely affect nearby buildings or receptors (Impact 3.12-2). Implementation of the Cannabis Program Update could result in new cannabis sites that would generate new vehicle trips. The areas in which cannabis facilities could be permitted are extensive; thus, the daily trips generated by operation of such facilities are anticipated to be widely spread across the county roadway network such that they are not anticipated to result in a doubling of traffic volumes that would create a significant traffic noise increase or impact (Impact 3.12-3).
- xi. **Public Services and Recreation (Impacts 3.13-1 and 3.13-2).** Implementation of the Cannabis Program Update would amend the Sonoma County Code to address proposed cannabis cultivation and supply chain uses beyond what the current County regulations allow, which could result in an expansion of cultivation and supply chain uses that could increase the demand for fire protection services. All existing and future permitted sites would be required to comply with state and local regulations (including the County Code, California Building Code, and California Fire Code regulations) to minimize fire risks. Compliance with these regulations would provide a sufficient level of fire protection and access such that fire protection services would not be substantially affected and would not necessitate the construction of new or expanded fire protection facilities that could result in physical impacts on the environment (Impact 3.13-1). Under the proposed Cannabis Program Update, cannabis cultivation and supply chain uses would be subject to state access and security requirements under CCR Title 4, Division 19, Sections 15036, 15042, 15042.1, 15043, 15045, 15046, 15047, and 15601. Implementation of these standards would address security needs for cannabis uses

and avoid the need for additional law enforcement services and facilities that could result in physical impacts on the environment (Impact 3.13-2).

- xii. **Transportation (Impact 3.14-1 and 3.14-3).** Adoption and implementation of the proposed Cannabis Program Update, including approval of subsequent commercial cannabis uses, would not conflict with the adopted policies of the Sonoma County General Plan regarding the circulation system (including bicycle and pedestrian circulation). Additionally, the proposed Cannabis Program Update would not alter current General Plan transportation policies and County roadway standards and would not conflict with these standards (Impact 3.14-1). Under the Cannabis Program Update, future cannabis uses would be required to comply with federal, state, and local regulations that would prevent substantial increases in transportation hazards in the county. County Construction Standards, adopted as County Ordinance 38-2020-0446, provide guidance for roadway and transportation-facility development to ensure a safe roadway system throughout the county. Additionally, Section Chapter 15, Article III, Section 15-8 of the County Municipal Code requires an encroachment permit for construction activities proposing frontage or access improvements to roadways. Therefore, the Cannabis Program Update would not substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible uses (Impact 3.14-3).
- xiii. **Utilities and Service Systems (Impact 3.16-1 and 3.16-2).** New cannabis facilities operating under the Cannabis Program Update would generate wastewater that would require treatment. As required under Sonoma Water's Sanitation Code Section 3.13, a sewer service permit would be required for installation, alteration, or repair of public sewer and sanitation facilities. Section 3.14 of the Sanitation Code requires sewer services to be granted solely for the specific use for which application was made. That is, a new cannabis use would be required to submit an application to the applicable sanitation district to establish service (Impact 3.16-2). Implementation of the Cannabis Program Update would generate solid waste, including cannabis waste, and facilities would be required to comply with state regulations related to cannabis waste. There are various cannabis waste disposal facilities available in the county, which may be contracted with to develop a cannabis waste management plan and support the state's track-and-trace system (Impact 3.16-3).
- xiv. **Wildfire (Impact 3.17-3).** The Cannabis Program Update would allow the continued development of cannabis uses and for the construction and operation of associated infrastructure necessary to support future cannabis operations. During a wildfire, most locations in Sonoma County could experience air pollutant concentration levels that exceed safe levels of exposure (i.e., air quality index of 151 or greater). CCR Title 8, Section 5141.1 requires employers to take steps to limit workers' exposure to wildfire smoke through feasible methods, such as air filtration systems and respiratory protective equipment. Because individual sites would be subject to these standards, employee exposure of hazard air pollutants during a wildfire would be limited (Impact 3.17-3).
- xv. **Cumulative Impacts**

An evaluation of the project's cumulative impacts is found in Chapter 4, "Cumulative Impacts," of the Draft EIR. Implementation of the Cannabis Program Update is not projected to result in any cumulatively considerable impacts in the following areas:

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Agricultural Resources (Impact CUM-4): Cannabis cultivation and supply chain uses within the County. Cannabis is currently defined by the state as an agricultural product and is considered a secondary use of agricultural land by the County. Implementation of the proposed Cannabis Program Update would reclassify cannabis as a controlled agricultural use and allow for development of structures to support non-production accessory uses, such as manufacturing, retail, distribution, and visitor-serving activities, which would involve conversion of farmland to a nonagricultural use. However, potential new developed uses that could be located on Farmland would not comprise a substantial area of the county's agricultural resources. Furthermore, support uses would be critical to protect the future agricultural use of the county's agricultural lands. Thus, the loss of such a relatively small area would not significantly detract from future agricultural use in the unincorporated area. Thus, the contribution of conversion of farmland to nonagricultural use under the Cannabis Program Update would not be cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Timberland and Forestry Resources (Impact CUM-5): The proposed Cannabis Program would require future cannabis operations that involve the removal of on-site trees, including those considered forestland, to comply with the requirements of the applicable County tree protection ordinances based on the type and maturity of the on-site trees. Similar to existing regulations, adoption and implementation of the Cannabis Program Update would not permit any new commercial cannabis uses within the timberland production (TP) zone. The intent of the TP zone is the conservation and protection of land capable of producing timber and forest products. Thus, the proposed Cannabis Program Update would not conflict with timber resource provisions of County Code. For these reasons, substantial loss or conversion of forestland is not anticipated under the Cannabis Program Update, compliance with the County's tree protection ordinances would ensure impacts to forestland would not be cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Special-Status Fisheries (Impact CUM-11): Permitted cannabis cultivation and noncultivation activities could result in impacts related to disturbance to or loss of special-status fisheries. Cannabis cultivation would be subject to SWRCB Order WQ 2023-0102-DWQ, and all cannabis-related project activities would be subject to CDFW Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement requirements therein (Term 3), Sonoma County General Plan policies, as well as Sonoma County Code. As such, this impact would be less than significant with no mitigation required. Thus, the contribution of permitted cannabis cultivation and noncultivation activities to cumulative impacts on special-status fisheries would be less than cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Conflicts with Any Local Policies or Ordinances Protecting Biological Resources (Impact CUM-15): Permitted cannabis cultivation and noncultivation activities could conflict with local policies and ordinances protecting biological resources. Cannabis-related activities would be required to follow the Sonoma County General Plan policies, as well as Sonoma County Code, and cultivation activities would need to comply with SWRCB Order WQ 2023-0102-DWQ, which would offset the Cannabis Program Update's contribution to this significant cumulative impact, and no conflict with the policies protecting biological resources would occur; therefore, this impact would be less than significant. Thus, the contribution of permitted cannabis cultivation and noncultivation activities to significant cumulative impacts from conflicts with local policies would be less than cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Geologic and Soil Resources (Impact CUM-20): Cannabis facility development and operation would be subject to compliance with SWRCB Order WQ 2023-0102-DWQ, the California Building Code, and Sonoma County's Grading and Drainage Regulation for construction (Chapter 11) and agriculture (Chapter 36). Compliance with existing regulations would ensure that activities at permitted commercial cannabis sites would not result in contribution to cumulative operational soil erosion and sedimentation impacts. As a result, the contribution of permitted commercial cannabis cultivation and noncultivation sites to cumulative geologic and soil stability impacts would not be cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Water Quality (Impact CUM-24): Development of commercial cannabis uses may include ground disturbance, vegetation removal, and grading, which could lead to accelerated erosion and sedimentation that causes poor water quality from high turbidity, total suspended solids, and total dissolved solids in local waterways, thus contributing to further degraded conditions in already impaired waterways and to alteration of floodplain conditions. However, compliance with relevant water quality regulations and BMPs would offset the project's risk of water degradation from soil erosion and other pollutants related to construction and operational activities. Compliance with these requirements (e.g., Chapters 11 and 11A of the Sonoma County Code and SWRCB Order WQ 2023-0102-DWQ) would offset contributions to cumulative water quality impacts. Thus, the contribution of commercial cannabis sites to water quality and floodplain impacts would be less than cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Surface Water Diversion (Impact CUM-26): Cannabis cultivation sites would be subject to compliance with the flow standards and diversion requirements set forth under SWRCB Order WQ 2023-0102-DWQ standards for water diversions. As documented in the Draft EIR, SWRCB's flow standards and diversion requirements were developed to protect fish spawning, migration, and rearing for

endangered anadromous salmonids, as well as flows needed to maintain natural flow variability within each watershed. The diversion requirements would ensure that the individual and cumulative effects of water diversions and discharges associated with commercial cannabis cultivation do not affect instream flows necessary for fish spawning, migration, and rearing for endangered anadromous salmonids, as well as flows needed to maintain natural flow variability. The policy was scientifically peer-reviewed by four experts. The peer review determined that water quality, instream flow, and diversion requirements of the policy were based on sound scientific knowledge, methods, and data. The effectiveness of compliance with numeric flow standards, associated curtailment of water diversions during flow periods, and the use of water storage is supported by research conducted by the UC Berkeley Cannabis Research Center of 91 watersheds in Humboldt and Mendocino Counties. This research identified that permitted cannabis cultivation sites generated substantially less impact on watershed flow conditions than unpermitted cannabis cultivation sites, as well as residential uses, and consist of 1 to 4 percent of available surface water flows depending on the extent of water storage used. Thus, the contribution of permitted commercial cannabis cultivation and noncultivation sites to surface water resource impacts would be less than cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Alteration of Drainage Patterns (Impact CUM-27): In areas where new construction for commercial cannabis facilities would take place, the peak flow and volume of storm water runoff generated from such areas would be affected by development through conversion of vegetated or otherwise pervious surfaces to impervious surfaces (e.g., roofs, driveways, walkways) and by the development of drainage systems that might more effectively connect these impervious surfaces to streams or other water bodies. The County requires compliance with the applicable municipal separate storm sewer system General Permit and Low-Impact Development Manual be demonstrated during the grading permit application phase. Additionally, on-site development and any associated off-site improvements greater than one acre in size would be required to comply with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Construction General Permit, which requires the development of a stormwater pollution prevention plan. Furthermore, agricultural grading and construction or modification of drainage facilities would involve preparatory land clearing, vegetation removal, or other ground disturbance, which would be required to meet the permitting requirements and standards outlined in Articles 10, 12, and 20, of Chapter 36 of the County Code (as required by proposed Code Section 26-18-020[B][1]). Additionally, as part of the building permit requirements, projects must be consistent with grading and drainage requirements in Chapter 11 and stormwater requirements in Chapter 11A. Thus, the contribution of permitted commercial cannabis cultivation and noncultivation sites to impacts associated with flooding would be less than cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Land Use and Planning Impacts (Impact CUM-28): Permitted commercial cannabis uses would be required to comply with Chapter 26 of the County Code, specifically, proposed changes associated with Sections 26-18-115, 26-18-270, and 26-20-025, which provide land use and development standards for commercial cannabis uses, as well as the establish the zoning districts that allow for commercial cannabis uses. In many instances, State and County regulations, in combination with the proposed Cannabis Program Update, would be sufficient to minimize environmental impacts; however, mitigation measures are provided in Draft EIR Sections 3.1 through 3.17 to address potentially significant impacts. Additionally, cannabis cultivation is an agricultural use that is compatible with other agricultural uses and accessory supply chain uses are supportive of agricultural uses. Overall, allowable uses under the Cannabis Program Update would be similar and compatible with existing land uses within the proposed zoning districts where cannabis uses could be developed and operated (e.g., commercial and industrial uses). Thus, cumulative land use impacts would not be cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Long-Term Operational Traffic Noise (Impact CUM-30): The Cannabis Program Update would allow for cannabis facilities and temporary events to operate in agricultural and resource districts and industrial and commercial districts. The areas in which cannabis facilities would be permitted is extensive; thus, the daily trips generated by operation of such facilities are anticipated to be widely spread across the County roadway network such that they are not anticipated to result in a doubling of traffic volumes that would create a significant traffic noise increase or impact. Therefore, because the Cannabis Program Update would not induce a substantial increase in vehicular trips in the County, it would

not result in increased transportation-related ambient noise levels under project or cumulative conditions. Therefore, the Cannabis Program Update's contribution to cumulative traffic noise impacts would not be cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Fire Protection Services (Impact CUM-32): Under the proposed Cannabis Program Update, commercial cannabis cultivation sites and noncultivation operations would be subject to compliance with PRC Sections 4290 and 4291, and CCR, Title 24, Section 701A.3 (additional building standards for new building construction located in any Fire Hazard Severity Zone within State Responsibility Areas (SRAs), any local agency Very-High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, or any Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Area), local fire protection agency requirements, and California Fire Code to minimize hazards of fire. In addition, cannabis cultivation and noncultivation sites would be required to comply with the Sonoma County Fire Safety Ordinance within the LRA (outside of the VHFHSZ), and the Fire Safe Regulations inside the SRA and LRA VHFHSZ, which establishes minimum fire safe standards for development within the unincorporated County. Furthermore, the County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan also includes provisions for the maintenance and vegetation of evacuation routes. Cannabis cultivation sites would be required to comply with CCR Title 4, Division 9, Section 15011 regarding the notification of the cannabis use to the local fire department. CCR Title 4, Division 9, Section 17202.1 and 17205 include requirements for cannabis manufacturing facilities that use a volatile solvent, flammable liquid, solvents that creates an asphyxiant gas, or ethanol to ensure compliance with Chapter 35 of the California Fire Code, CCR Title 8, Sections 5416 through 5420 that address ventilation and control of ignition sources, Division of Occupational Safety and Health regulations, and all applicable fire, safety, and building codes related to the processing, handling, and storage of solvents and gas.

Compliance with these requirements would ensure the provision of on-site fire protection measures do not exacerbate existing fire hazards that would contribute to the need for additional fire service needs or new fire protection facilities (e.g., fire stations). As a result, the proposed Cannabis Program Update's contribution to cumulative fire protection impacts would not be cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Law Enforcement Services (Impact CUM-33): To meet the requirements under CCR Title 4, Division 9, Section 15042 it is expected that fencing or other types of site-specific security measures would be implemented to ensure that no unauthorized individuals may enter the premises. In addition, CCR Title 4, Division 9, Section 15042.1 requires a security plan for permitted manufacturing facilities; Section 15043 requires licensee employee badges for retail sales or participants in temporary cannabis events; Section 15045 requires security personnel to provide onsite security services for licensed microbusinesses and retailers; and Sections 15046 and 15047 require commercial-grade locks and alarm systems, respectively, to be installed on all points of entry and exit for cannabis facilities, except for at cultivation activities and microbusinesses. In addition, specific security requirements would be required for temporary cannabis events under CCR Title 4, Division 9, Section 15601. These standards would address safety of the facilities and therefore would not require increased law enforcement services that would contribute to the need for new or altered facilities that could create environmental impacts. As a result, the proposed Cannabis Program Update's contribution to cumulative law enforcement impacts would not be cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Infrastructure Improvement Impacts (Impact CUM-36): Commercial cannabis facilities sites may construct or improve water, wastewater, stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, and telecommunication facilities as needed based on site-specific conditions. Extension of these infrastructure facilities are expected to be limited because they are generally available along roadway frontage of the parcels or may be accommodated on the site (e.g., drainage ditches, detention basins, solar energy generation) and would not contribute to cumulative conditions. As a result, the proposed Cannabis Program Update's contribution to cumulative infrastructure impacts would not be cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Wastewater Service (Impact CUM-37): Commercial cannabis cultivation would be prohibited from discharging cannabis wastewater into on-site wastewater treatment systems (Term 27 of Attachment A of SWRCB Order WQ 2023-0102-DWQ) and indoor commercial cannabis

cultivation uses would discharge cannabis wastewater through a connection to a permitted wastewater treatment collection system that accepts cannabis wastewater. If the permitted wastewater treatment collection system cannot accept cannabis wastewater, the indoor commercial cannabis operation must collect the cannabis wastewater in storage tanks and disposed of it through a permitted wastewater handler at a permitted wastewater treatment facility that accepts cannabis wastewater (Term 38 of Attachment A of SWRCB Order WQ 2023-0102-DWQ). In addition, as required under Sonoma Water's Sanitation Code Section 3.13, a sewer service permit would be required for installation, alteration, or repair of public sewer and sanitation facilities. Section 3.14 of the Sanitation Code requires sewer services to be granted solely for the specific use for which an application was made. That is, a new commercial cannabis use would be required to submit an application to Sonoma Water to establish service. Thus, the contribution of permitted commercial cannabis sites to wastewater service impacts would not be cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Solid Waste Service (Impact CUM-39): The Cannabis Program Update would allow for an increase in acreage of cannabis cultivation and noncultivation uses, the construction and operation of which would generate solid waste that would be required to comply with state regulations related to cannabis waste. There are various cannabis waste disposal facilities available in the County, which may be contracted to develop a cannabis waste management plan and support the state's track-and-trace system. In addition, because of the availability of these facilities and CCR, Title 4, Section 17223 regulations, it is not expected that implementation of the project would require construction or expansion of solid waste facilities that could trigger environmental impacts under cumulative conditions. As a result, commercial cannabis sites' contribution to cumulative infrastructure impacts would not be cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Wildfire Impacts (Impact CUM-40): The indirect impacts of wildfire include: impairment of adopted impair an adopted emergency response plan, emergency access, or emergency evacuation plan; exposure of occupants to pollutant concentration from wildfire due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors; installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources) and exposure of people or structures to substantial risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes. These impacts tend to be site specific and would not combine such that a cumulative condition could occur across this county.

1.2.2 Findings Regarding Potentially Significant Effects that Can Be Mitigated to a Less Than Significant Level(14 CCR Section 15091[a][1])

The Final EIR identified potentially significant impacts from adoption of the Cannabis Program Update as originally proposed that will be avoided or substantially lessened with the adoption of the mitigation measures by incorporation in the ordinance of additional or clarified eligibility and siting criteria, application requirements, performance standards, and conditions of approval.

The Board finds that, based on the analysis in the Final EIR and evidence in the record, the mitigation measures identified in the Final EIR are feasible, in that they are capable of being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable time, taking into account economic, environmental, legal, social, and technological factors, and will avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effects identified in the Final EIR.

The Board finds that changes have been made in the Cannabis Program Update eligibility and siting criteria, application requirements, performance standards, and conditions for approval of clearances or permits for commercial cannabis activities under the ordinance that fully incorporate each of the mitigation measures identified in the Final EIR.

The feasible mitigation measures are discussed below and are set forth in the MMRP that is provided in Attachment A. The mitigation measures for each significant environmental impact identified in the Final EIR are referred to below.

EVIDENCE

- a) **Aesthetic Resources: Scenic Resources (Impacts 3.1-1, 3.1-2, and 3.1-3).** Potentially significant impacts on aesthetic resources that involve a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista or viewshed, damage to a scenic resource, or degradation to the existing visual character or quality of the county (Impacts 3.1-1, 3.1-2, 3.1-3) will be mitigated to a less-than-significant level through ordinance requirements. These requirements stipulate that coverings for hoop houses that are visible from a public vantage point be nonreflective and that weed block materials be nonreflective and not plastic, which would ensure that their visibility would be limited such that they would no longer be intrusive or dominant features in a scenic vista or viewshed. This mitigation measure would also prohibit the installation of solid fencing, which may be visible from great distances in scenic landscapes, scenic corridors, and community separators. With implementation of this mitigation measure, cannabis operations would appear substantially similar to other agricultural uses in the county, which are defined features of the scenic resources identified in the county (Performance Standard—Mitigation Measure 3.1-1 [ZPC, UPC, DRH]: Implement Additional Measures to Protect Scenic Resources).
- b) **Aesthetic Resources: Light and Glare (Impact 3.1-4).** Potentially significant impacts related to light and glare (Impact 3.1-4) will be mitigated to a less-than-significant level through the zoning permit for cannabis (ZPC), use permit for cannabis (UPC), and design review hearing (DRH) processes requirement to submit a lighting plan and demonstrate consistency with light and glare standards. These requirements would prevent excessive lighting and spillover of light onto adjacent property and limit the types of materials that may be used on buildings and at cultivation sites that could create glare. With implementation of these mitigation measures, there would not be substantial new sources of light or glare associated with the Cannabis Program Update. Impacts will also be mitigated to a less-than-significant level through ordinance requirements requiring nonreflective coverings of hoop houses if they are visible from a public vantage point and nonreflective and non-plastic weed block materials (Performance Standards—Mitigation Measure 3.1-4a [ZPC, UPC, DRH]: Implement Mitigation Measure 3.1-1 and Mitigation Measure 3.1-4b [ZPC, UPC, DRH]: Implement New Light and Glare Requirements).
- c) **Air Quality: Construction-Related Emissions (Impact 3.3-2).** Potentially significant emission of reactive organic gases, nitrogen oxides, respirable particulate matter, and fine particulate matter from the operation of heavy-duty equipment, vendor and worker commute trips, and application of architectural coatings (Impact 3.3-2) will be mitigated to a less-than-significant level through the DRH or UPC process. The processes contain requirements for issuance of grading or building permits to ensure that the Air District's basic construction mitigation measures from Table 5-2 of the BAAQMD 2022 CEQA Guidelines (or subsequent updates), such as speed limits, limited construction activity during conditions of high wind, watering of unpaved surfaces, covering of loose materials, and washing out of truck tires prior to leaving a construction site, are noted on the construction documents (Performance Standard—Mitigation Measure 3.2-2 [DRH and UPC]: Implement the Bay Area Air Quality Management District's Basic Construction Mitigation Measures).
- d) **Biological Resources: Loss of Special-Status Plant Species and Habitat (Impact 3.4-1).** Potentially significant impacts on special-status plant species (Impact 3.4-1) will be mitigated through the DRH or UPC process by surveying individual project sites to identify the potential for existence of special-status plants that could be affected due to project implementation. If the existence or potential for existence of special-status plants is identified, applicants will be required to either avoid special-status plant species, obtain an incidental take permit (i.e., for CESA-listed species), or compensate for impacts. Additionally, existing populations of invasive plants will be removed from project sites, and heavy equipment and other machinery will be inspected for the presence of invasive species before on-site use and shall be cleaned before entering the site to reduce the risk of introducing invasive plant species (Performance Standards—Mitigation Measure 3.4-1a [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Biotic Resource Assessment Consisting of Pre-Application Biological Surveys and Project-Level Analysis; Mitigation Measure 3.4-1b [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Special-Status Plant Surveys and Implement Avoidance Measures and Mitigation; Mitigation Measure 3.4-1c [DRH or UPC]: Implement Measures to Avoid Introduction or Spread of Invasive Plant and Wildlife Species).

- e) **Biological Resources: Loss of Special-Status Wildlife Species and Habitat (Impact 3.4-2).** Potentially significant impacts on special-status wildlife species (Impact 3.4-2) will be mitigated through the ZPC, DRH, or UPC process by surveying individual project sites to identify the potential for existence of special-status wildlife and their habitat that could be affected due to project implementation. If the existence or potential for existence of special-status wildlife is identified, applicants will be required to conduct additional surveys or implement avoidance measures, obtain an incidental take permit (i.e., for CESA-listed species), or compensate for impacts (Performance Standards—Mitigation Measure 3.4-1a [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Biotic Resource Assessment Consisting of Pre-Application Biological Surveys and Project-Level Analysis; Mitigation Measure 3.4-2a [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Pre-Disturbance Surveys for Special-Status Amphibians and Implement Avoidance Measures; Mitigation Measure 3.4-2b [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Pre-Disturbance Surveys for Northwestern Pond Turtle and Implement Avoidance Measures; Mitigation Measure 3.4-2d [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Pre-Disturbance Nesting Raptor Surveys and Establish Protective Buffers; Mitigation Measure 3.4-2e [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Take-Avoidance Survey for Burrowing Owl, Implement Avoidance Measures, and Compensate for Loss of Occupied Burrows or Nests; Mitigation Measure 3.4-2f [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Northern Spotted Owl Pre-Disturbance Habitat Suitability Surveys and Determine Presence or Absence of the Species; Mitigation Measure 3.4-2g [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Pre-Disturbance Special-Status Nesting Bird Surveys and Establish Protective Buffers; Mitigation Measure 3.4-2h [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Marbled Murrelet Pre-Disturbance Habitat Suitability Surveys and Determine Presence or Absence of the Species; Mitigation Measure 3.4-2i [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Crotch's Bumble Bee Pre-Disturbance Habitat Suitability Surveys and Pre-Disturbance Surveys; Mitigation Measure 3.4-2j [DRH or UPC]: Avoid Overwintering Monarch Habitat and Conduct Pre-Disturbance Monarch Survey; Mitigation Measure 3.4-2k [DRH or UPC]: Avoid Loss of Other Special-Status Butterfly Species and Host Plants; Mitigation Measure 3.4-2l [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Pre-Disturbance American Badger Survey and Establish Protective Buffers; Mitigation Measure 3.4-2m [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Pre-Disturbance Surveys for Ringtail and Implement Avoidance Measures; Mitigation Measure 3.4-2n [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Pre-Disturbance Special-Status Bat Surveys and Establish Protective Buffers; Mitigation Measure 3.4-2o [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Pre-Disturbance Sonoma Tree Vole Surveys and Implement Avoidance Measures; Mitigation Measure 3.4-2p [ZPC, UPC, DRH]: Implement Mitigation Measure 3.1-4b; Mitigation Measure 3.4-2q [DRH or UPC]: Implement Operational Noise Reduction Measures for Northern Spotted Owl and Marbled Murrelet).
- f) **Biological Resources: Loss of Sensitive Natural Communities, Riparian Habitat, Old-Growth Habitat, or Other Sensitive Habitats (Impact 3.4-4).** Potentially significant impacts on sensitive natural communities, riparian habitat, old-growth habitat, or other sensitive habitats (Impact 3.4-4) will be mitigated through the DRH or UPC process because it would require applicants to identify and avoid sensitive resources or provide compensation for the loss of riparian habitat through mitigation banks and a Compensatory Stream and Riparian Mitigation and Monitoring Plan, which can include enhancement of existing habitat, creation and management of off-site habitat, conservation easements, or other appropriate measures. These mitigation measures are consistent with the requirements of Attachment A (Section 1, General Requirements and Prohibitions) of SWRCB Order WQ 2023-0102-DWQ and Sonoma County codes, including area plans. In addition, measures would be taken to prevent the spread of invasive plant species, which could cause type conversion or compete with individuals within those sensitive natural communities or other sensitive habitats (Performance Standards—Mitigation Measure 3.4-1a [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Biotic Resource Assessment Consisting of Pre-Application Biological Surveys and Project-Level Analysis; Mitigation Measure 3.4-1c [DRH or UPC]: Implement Measures to Avoid Introduction or Spread of Invasive Plant and Wildlife Species; Mitigation Measure 3.4-4 [DRH or UPC]: Identify, Avoid, and Protect Sensitive Natural Communities, Riparian Habitat, Old-Growth Habitat, or Other Sensitive Habitats or Provide Compensation).
- g) **Biological Resources: Disturbance or Loss of State or Federally Protected Wetlands and Other Waters (Impact 3.4-5).** Potentially significant impacts on state or federally protected wetlands and other waters (Impact 3.4-5) will be mitigated through the DRH or UPC process because these resources would be identified by a qualified biologist as part of a biotic resource assessment report for the site and avoided through establishment of a protective buffer. In addition, measures would be taken to prevent the spread of invasive plant species, which could cause type conversion or compete with individuals within those sensitive natural communities or other

sensitive habitats (Performance Standards—Mitigation Measure 3.4-1a [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Biotic Resource Assessment Consisting of Pre-Application Biological Surveys and Project-Level Analysis; Mitigation Measure 3.4-1c [DRH or UPC]: Implement Measures to Avoid Introduction or Spread of Invasive Plant and Wildlife Species; Mitigation Measure 3.4-5 [DRH or UPC]: Identify State or Federally Protected Wetlands and Other Waters and Avoid These Features).

- h) **Biological Resources: Interfere with Resident or Migratory Wildlife Corridors or Native Wildlife Nursery Sites (Impact 3.4-6).** Potentially significant impacts on migratory wildlife corridors or native wildlife nursery sites (Impact 3.4-6) will be mitigated through the ZPC, DRH, or UPC process because review and approval of the biotic resource assessment report would be required and a prohibition would be established for new disturbance activities in areas identified as containing or being within 1.3 miles of a California tiger salamander breeding occurrence or having potential for California tiger salamander presence (pursuant to modeling in the Conservation Strategy) such that federal incidental take permitting under the Conservation Strategy would not be required. In addition, protocol-level surveys for special-status plants and avoidance of California tiger salamander and special-status plants would be required (Performance Standards—Mitigation Measure 3.4-1a [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Biotic Resource Assessment Consisting of Pre-Application Surveys and Project-Level Analysis; Mitigation Measure 3.4-4 [DRH or UPC]: Identify, Avoid, and Protect Sensitive Natural Communities, Riparian Habitat, and Old-Growth Habitat, or Other Sensitive Habitats or Provide Compensation; Mitigation Measure 3.4-6a [ZPC]: Utilize Wildlife-Friendly Building and Fencing Designs; Mitigation Measure 3.4-6b [DRH and UPC]: Review Mapping and Analyze Landscape Impacts for Approval; Mitigation Measure 3.4-6c [DRH or UPC]: Utilize Wildlife-Friendly Building and Fencing Designs; Mitigation Measure 3.4-6d [DRH or UPC]: Retain Wildlife Nursery Habitat and Implement Buffers to Avoid Wildlife Nursey Sites).
- i) **Biological Resources: Conflict with Any Local Policies or Ordinances Protecting Biological Resources (Impact 3.4-7).** Multiple policies in the Sonoma County General Plan, multiple area plans, and the Sonoma County Code protect biological resources. Mitigation measures identified in Impacts 3.4-1, 3.4-2, 3.4-3, 3.4-4, 3.4-5, and 3.4-6 would be consistent with Sonoma County policies and requirements that protect biological resources, as described above (Performance Standards—Mitigation Measure 3.4-1a [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Biotic Resource Assessment Consisting of Pre-Application Biological Surveys and Project-Level Analysis; Mitigation Measure 3.4-1b [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Special-Status Plant Surveys and Implement Avoidance Measures and Mitigation; Mitigation Measure 3.4-1c [DRH or UPC]: Implement Measures to Avoid Introduction or Spread of Invasive Plant and Wildlife Species; Mitigation Measure 3.4-2a [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Pre-Disturbance Surveys for Special-Status Amphibians and Implement Avoidance Measures; Mitigation Measure 3.4-2b [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Pre-Disturbance Surveys for Northwestern Pond Turtle and Implement Avoidance Measures; Mitigation Measure 3.4-2d [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Pre-Disturbance Nesting Raptor Surveys and Establish Protective Buffers; Mitigation Measure 3.4-2e [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Take-Avoidance Survey for Burrowing Owl, Implement Avoidance Measures, and Compensate for Loss of Occupied Burrows or Nests; Mitigation Measure 3.4-2f [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Northern Spotted Owl Pre-Disturbance Habitat Suitability Surveys and Determine Presence or Absence of the Species; Mitigation Measure 3.4-2g [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Pre-Disturbance Special-Status Nesting Bird Surveys and Establish Protective Buffers; Mitigation Measure 3.4-2h [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Marbled Murrelet Pre-Disturbance Habitat Suitability Surveys and Determine Presence or Absence of the Species; Mitigation Measure 3.4-2i [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Crotch's Bumble Bee Pre-Disturbance Habitat Suitability Surveys and Pre-Disturbance Surveys; Mitigation Measure 3.4-2j [DRH or UPC]: Avoid Overwintering Monarch Habitat and Conduct Pre-Disturbance Monarch Survey; Mitigation Measure 3.4-2k [DRH or UPC]: Avoid Loss of Other Special-Status Butterfly Species and Host Plants; Mitigation Measure 3.4-2l [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Pre-Disturbance American Badger Survey and Establish Protective Buffers; Mitigation Measure 3.4-2m [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Pre-Disturbance Surveys for Ringtail and Implement Avoidance Measures; Mitigation Measure 3.4-2n [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Pre-Disturbance Special-Status Bat Surveys and Establish Protective Buffers; Mitigation Measure 3.4-2o [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Pre-Disturbance Sonoma Tree Vole Surveys and Implement Avoidance Measures; Mitigation Measure 3.4-2p [ZPC, UPC, DRH]: Implement Mitigation Measure 3.1-4b; Mitigation Measure 3.4-2q [DRH or UPC]: Implement Operational Noise Reduction Measures for Northern Spotted Owl and Marbled Murrelet; Mitigation Measure 3.4-5 [DRH or UPC]: Identify State or Federally Protected Wetlands and

Other Waters and Avoid These Features; Mitigation Measure 3.4-4 [DRH or UPC]: Identify, Avoid, and Protect Sensitive Natural Communities, Riparian Habitat, Old-Growth Habitat, or Other Sensitive Habitats or Provide Compensation; Mitigation Measure 3.4-5 [DRH or UPC]: Identify State or Federally Protected Wetlands and Other Waters and Avoid These Features; Mitigation Measure 3.4-6a [ZPC]: Utilize Wildlife-Friendly Building and Fencing Designs; Mitigation Measure 3.4-6b [DRH and UPC]: Review Mapping and Analyze Landscape Impacts for Approval; Mitigation Measure 3.4-6c [DRH or UPC]: Utilize Wildlife-Friendly Building and Fencing Designs; Mitigation Measure 3.4-6d [DRH or UPC]: Retain Wildlife Nursery Habitat and Implement Buffers to Avoid Wildlife Nursey Sites).

- j) **Biological Resources: Conflict with Provisions of an Adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or Other Approved Local, Regional, or State Habitat Conservation Plan (Impact 3.4-8).** Potentially significant impacts associated with conflicts with provisions of an adopted habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan (Impact 3.4-8) will be mitigated through the ZPC, DRH, or UPC process because review and approval of the biotic resource assessment report would be required and a prohibition would be established for new disturbance activities in areas identified as containing or being within 1.3 miles of a California tiger salamander breeding occurrence or having potential for California tiger salamander presence (pursuant to modeling in the Conservation Strategy) such that federal incidental take permitting under the Conservation Strategy would not be required. In addition, protocol-level surveys for special-status plants and avoidance of California tiger salamander and special-status plants would be required (Performance Standards—Mitigation Measure 3.4-1a [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Biotic Resource Assessment Consisting of Pre-Application Surveys and Project-Level Analysis; Mitigation Measure 3.4-1b [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Special-Status Plant Surveys and Implement Avoidance Measures and Mitigation; Mitigation Measure 3.4-2a [DRH or UPC]: Conduct Pre-Disturbance Surveys for Special-Status Amphibians and Implement Avoidance Measures; Mitigation Measure 3.4-8 [DRH or UPC]: Limit New Disturbance Activities in the Santa Rosa Plain Conservation Strategy Plan Area).
- k) **Cultural Resources: Adverse Change in the Significance of a Historical Resource (Impact 3.5-1).** Potentially significant impacts associated with adverse change in the significance of a historical resource (Impact 3.5-1) will be mitigated through the DRH or UPC process because actions would be taken to record, evaluate, avoid, or otherwise treat the resource appropriately in accordance with pertinent laws and regulations (Performance Standards—Mitigation Measure 3.5-1 [UPC and DRH]: Implement Additional Measures to Protect Historical Resources).
- l) **Cultural Resources: Adverse Change in the Significance of Unique Archaeological Resource (Impact 3.5-2).** Potentially significant impacts associated with adverse change in the significance of a unique archaeological resource (Impact 3.5-2) will be mitigated through the ZPC, DRH, or UPC process because referrals, database checks, and/or surveys would be conducted to identify archaeological resources and actions would be taken to avoid, record, evaluate, or otherwise treat the resource appropriately in accordance with pertinent laws and regulations (Performance Standards—Mitigation Measure 3.5-2a [UPC and DRH]: Cultural Resource Pre-Approval Evaluation; Mitigation Measure 3.5-2b [UPC and DRH] Archaeological Site Avoidance; Mitigation Measure 3.5-2c [ZPC]: Implement Mitigation Measure 3.15-1a).
- m) **Energy: Conflict with or Obstruct a State or Local Plan for Renewable Energy or Energy Efficiency (Impact 3.6-2).** Potentially significant impacts to the Sonoma County Climate Action Resolution's energy goals will be mitigated because the Cannabis Program Update would require provisions that address renewable energy or energy efficiency to be incorporated to improve the energy efficiency and renewable energy potential of new cannabis cultivation and supply chain uses, which would align with the measures of the Sonoma County Climate Action Resolution (Performance Standards—Mitigation Measure 3.6-2 [DRH and UPC]: Implement Energy Conservation and Renewable Energy Measures).
- n) **Geology, Soils, and Mineral Resources: Directly or Indirectly Destroy a Unique Paleontological Resource or Site (Impact 3.7-4).** Potentially significant impacts associated with the discovery of previously unknown paleontological resources during construction will be mitigated by requiring retention of a Qualified Professional Paleontologist to prepare a project-specific paleontological resource mitigation and monitoring program, which

will include a preconstruction paleontological site assessment, procedures and protocol for paleontological monitoring and recordation, construction worker awareness training, and procedures for discovery of paleontological resources (Performance Standards—Mitigation Measure 3.7-1 [DRH and UPC]: Protection of Paleontological Resources).

- o) **Hazards and Hazardous Materials: Be Located on a Site Included on a List of Hazardous Material Sites Compiled Pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5, Which Would Create a Significant Hazard to the Public or Environment or Create a Significant Hazard to the Public or Environment through Reasonably Foreseeable Upset and/or Accident Conditions Involving Release of Hazardous Materials (Impact 3.9-3).** Potentially significant impacts related to the exposure of the public or environment to hazardous conditions during earthmoving activities will be mitigated because hazardous site conditions would be identified and addressed prior to the development or expansion of cannabis uses (Performance Standards—Mitigation Measure 3.9-3 [DRH and UPC]: Implement Soils Investigation Requirements).
- p) **Hydrology and Water Quality: Decrease of Groundwater Supplies or Interfere Substantially with Groundwater Recharge Such That the Project May Impede Sustainable Groundwater Management of the Basin (Impact 3.10-2).** Potentially significant impacts to groundwater resources associated with new cannabis facilities will be mitigated because proof of adequate water supply would be incorporated into the County's standards for cannabis projects and ensure that groundwater production does not result in adverse environmental effects (Performance Standards—Mitigation Measure 3.10-2a [DRH and UPC]: Implement Additional Measures to Protect Groundwater Resources; Mitigation Measure 3.10-2b [ZPC]: Implement Groundwater Monitoring).
- q) **Noise: Cause Excessive Long-Term Operational Stationary Noise Levels (Impact 3.12-4).** Potentially significant impacts could result in the long-term operation of new noise-generating stationary equipment (e.g., mechanical trimmers, greenhouse fans) and activities (e.g., visitor serving uses and). Long-term operational stationary noise levels will be mitigated because the project would require the preparation of a noise analysis prior to operation of a cannabis facility in an industrial or commercial district and for uses with outdoor amplified music, and would ensure that noise levels associated with cannabis facilities are in compliance with General Plan Policy NE-1c and Table NE-2. These requirements were developed by the County to protect the peace of the community and avoid noise-related health effects, such as loss of sleep (Performance Standards—Mitigation Measure 3.12-4a: Outdoor Amplified Live Music Requires a Use Permit at Storefront Retailers; Mitigation Measure 3.12-4b [UPC]: Noise Reduction Measures for Outdoor Amplified Live Music at Cannabis Events or at Storefront Retailers; Mitigation Measure 3.12-4c [DRH]: Implement Noise Reduction Measures to Reduce Operational Noise Impacts in Industrial and Commercial Districts).
- r) **Tribal Cultural Resources: Change the Significance of a Tribal Cultural Resource (Impact 3.15-1).** Potentially significant impacts associated with damage to tribal cultural resources if tribal cultural resources are identified through the development of permitted cannabis cultivation and supply chain activities will be mitigated because permitted cannabis cultivation sites would be required to comply with County requirements as well as Attachment A (Section 1, General Requirements and Prohibitions) of SWRCB Order WQ 2023-0102-DWQ, which includes protection measures for tribal cultural resources for cultivation activities (Performance Standards—Mitigation Measure 3.15-1a [ZPC]: Protection of Tribal Cultural Resources for Permitted Uses; Mitigation Measure 3.15-1b [UPC and DRH]: Implement Mitigation Measure 3.5-2a; Mitigation Measure 3.15-1c [UPC and DRH]: Tribal Cultural Resources Pre-Approval Consultation; Mitigation Measure 3.15-1d [UPC and DRH]: Avoidance of Tribal Cultural Resources; Mitigation Measure 3.15-1e [UPC and DRH]: Avoidance of Human Remains).
- s) **Utilities and Service Systems: Result in Insufficient Water Supplies (Impact 3.16-1).** Potentially significant impacts associated with water supply will be mitigated because an applicant would be required to either not increase water demand above levels of an existing building or obtain verification from a water supplier that water is available for the project in normal, dry, and multiple-dry years, and if these conditions cannot be met, a project will not be approved (Performance Standards—Mitigation Measure 3.16-1 (All Cannabis Uses): Municipal Water Supply Verification for New Cannabis Uses).

t) **Wildfire: Expose People or Structures, Either Directly or Indirectly, to a Significant Risk of Loss, Injury, or Death Involving Wildland Fires, or Substantially Impair an Adopted Emergency Response Plan, Emergency Access, or Emergency Evacuation Plan in Areas in or Near SRAs or Land Classified as Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, or Require the Installation or Maintenance of Associated Infrastructure (such as Roads, Fuel Breaks, Emergency Water Sources) That May Exacerbate Fire Risk or That May Result in Temporary or Ongoing Impacts to the Environment or Expose People or Structures to Significant Risks, including Downslope or Downstream Flooding or Landslides, as a Result of Runoff, Post-Fire Slope Instability, or Drainage Changes (Impacts 3.17-1, 3.17-2, 3.17-4, and 3.17-5).** Potentially significant impacts associated with conditions affecting wildfires (Impact 3.17-1) will be mitigated by limiting the potential for ignition specific to cannabis uses through standards for operation of cannabis uses, limiting fuels availability in the event that a fire is ignited, and ensuring that fire suppression capabilities are adequate to address potential fires before they become catastrophic. Additionally, these measures would improve access for emergency services to be better equipped to reach an established fire, while also supporting evacuation efforts necessary for public safety. Through these mitigation measures, the incremental increase in fire risk would be reduced to a less-than-significant level because each site would be evaluated individually by the County Fire Marshal and local fire districts in accordance with standards and performance metrics to reduce the potential for ignition. Implementation of the mitigation measures would limit the potential for ignition through standards for operation of cannabis uses, limit fuels availability in the event that a fire is ignited, and ensure that fire suppression capabilities are adequate to address potential fires before they become catastrophic. Finally, these measures would improve access for emergency services to be better equipped to reach an established fire, while also supporting evacuation efforts necessary for public safety. Therefore, with implementation of these mitigation measures, adopted emergency response plans, emergency access, or emergency evacuation plans in areas in or near SRAs or VHFHSZ would not be substantially impaired (Impact 3.17-2). Additionally, with implementation of these mitigation measures minimizing the risk of wildfire, no additional infrastructure and maintenance activities would be necessary beyond that required for project approval (Impact 3.17-4) and the potential for an increased risk of post-fire flooding, landslide, and slope instability would be minimized because the potential for a catastrophic wildfire causing those conditions would be minimized (Impact 3.17-5). Furthermore, Steve Mosiurchak, Sonoma County Fire Marshal, sent a letter to Cystal Acker, the supervising planner for the Cannabis Program Update on August 27, 2025, in support of the mitigation measures included in the Draft EIR. In his letter he states that he has, “reviewed the wildfire impact analysis of the Draft EIR and reviewed and advised on the wildfire and evacuation mitigation measures...and consulted with local fire district chiefs and CAL FIRE.” According to this review, Mr. Mosiurchak indicated that, based on his extensive experience in fire services and reviewing and inspecting cannabis operations as well as other use types in the county, that the “mitigation measures will be effective at reducing the risk of ignition at cannabis sties, stopping the spread of uncontrolled wildfire, and ensuring adequate evacuation and emergency response (Mosiurchak, pers. comm., 2025).” This expert opinion supports conclusions presented in the Draft EIR. (Performance Standards—Mitigation Measure 3.17-1a [UPC, DRH, and ZPC]: Limitation of Use Types in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones; Mitigation Measure 3.17-1b [UPC and DRH]: Require All Structures to Meet Defensible Space; Mitigation Measure 3.17-1c [UPC and DRH]: Require All Structures to Be Constructed with Noncombustible Materials; Mitigation Measure 3.17-1d [UPC and DRH]: Develop and Implement Site-Specific Fire Protection and Prevention Plan; Mitigation Measure 3.17-1e [UPC and DRH]: Implement Site-Specific Standards for Events).

u. **Cumulative Impacts**

An evaluation of the project’s cumulative impacts is found in Chapter 4, “Cumulative Impacts,” of the Draft EIR. Implementation of the Cannabis Program is not projected to result in any cumulatively considerable impacts with implementation of mitigation measures, described above, in the following areas:

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Scenic Resources and Scenic Highways (Impact CUM-1): Potential development of commercial cannabis cultivation and noncultivation operations would introduce structures and features that are similar to those used for other agricultural activities. New cannabis uses would be subject to the County’s design standards, which would minimize adverse visual effects. However, implementation of Mitigation Measures 3.1-1 and 3.1-2 would require tarps to be non-reflective and would prohibit solid fencing within County-designated scenic landscapes, scenic corridors, and community separators. With implementation of this

mitigation measure, cannabis operations would appear substantially similar to other agricultural uses in the county, which are a defined feature of the scenic resources identified in the county. Thus, with implementation of Mitigation Measures 3.1-1 and 3.1-2, impacts on scenic resources and scenic highways would not be cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Visual Character and Quality (Impact CUM-2): The visual character of the County contains diverse features throughout its different areas and communities. Overall, the visual character includes natural habitat conditions and waterways; rural and agricultural land uses, such as vineyards, orchards, field crops, rangeland, and supporting agricultural buildings (barns, buildings used for equipment storage and processing of agricultural products, offices, hoop houses, and shipping containers); and rural communities consisting of residential, commercial, office, and light industrial uses. New cannabis uses would be subject to the County's design standards, which would minimize adverse visual effects. Regardless, depending on the materials used, tarps and security fencing may be visible from a distance and could be considered a dominant and intrusive feature of a scenic vista. However, with implementation of Mitigation Measures 3.1-1 cannabis operations would appear substantially similar to other agricultural uses in the County, which are a defined feature of the visual character of the county. Thus, upon implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.1-1, this impact would not be cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Light and Glare (Impact CUM-3): Commercial cannabis cultivation sites are known to use light sources for cultivation of commercial cannabis plants (on-site nurseries, commercial nurseries, mixed-light cultivation, and indoor cultivation), in addition to nighttime lighting associated with operation and security for all cultivation types. While state licensing requirements would ensure that light and glare sources from outdoor cannabis cultivation is fully shielded and downward casting, there are no State standards and limited County standards for lighting associated with uses other than outdoor cultivation. Therefore, this impact would be potentially significant. However, implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.1-4a would require visible tarps to be non-reflective and Mitigation Measure 3.1-4b would establish new standards for lighting and glare in the county. These measures are consistent with standards typically required for projects subject to a use permit or design review with hearing process. These requirements would prevent spillover of light onto adjacent property, limit the types of materials that may be used on buildings and at cultivation sites. With implementation of these mitigation measures, there would not be substantial new sources of light or glare associated with the proposed Program. Thus, with implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.1-4a and 3.1-4b, the program's contribution to the cumulative impact on light and glare would not be cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Construction Criteria Air Pollutants (Impact CUM-6): The SFBAAB is in nonattainment for ozone and respirable particulate matter (PM₁₀) with respect to the California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) and for ozone and fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) with respect to the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The NCAB is in attainment for all pollutants. Construction activities in the region would emit additional particulate matter and ozone precursors that may conflict with attainment efforts in the County. Because the region is in nonattainment for the ozone, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} NAAQS and the ozone and PM_{2.5} CAAQS, the existing cumulative condition is adverse, and any additional emissions would exacerbate that condition. However, BAAQMD has established construction emission thresholds for development projects that determine whether a particular project's emissions would be cumulatively considerable. The Cannabis Program Update's construction emissions for each commercial cannabis use type would not exceed BAAQMD's thresholds of significance (see Impact 3.3-1); however, the Cannabis Program Update does not include BAAQMD's basic best management practices for construction; therefore, Mitigation Measure 3.3-2 is recommended. This mitigation measure would comply with BAAQMD's guidance and reduce fugitive dust impacts to a less-than-significant level. All other criteria air pollutants would remain below the BAAQMD screening thresholds. Therefore, the Cannabis Program Update's construction-related contribution to criteria air pollutant or precursor emissions would not be cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Odors (Impact CUM-8): While it is acknowledged that the Cannabis Program Update would result in significant odor impacts at individual sites permitted under the program, these impacts would be limited to the area surrounding the commercial cannabis facility and would not create a

countywide odor impact. All commercial cannabis operations would be subject to the County's standards for cannabis cultivation. In addition, Mitigation Measure 3.3-4 is recommended to include more stringent provisions of Section 26-18-115(C)(1)(a) of the County's standards for cannabis cultivation. Furthermore, due to economic constraints (see Section 3.0, "Approach to the Environmental Analysis," the total projected outdoor cultivation would be limited to approximately 188 acres. While there may be odors associated with cannabis uses, cannabis odor impacts are impacts of the project and are not associated with a county-wide odor cumulative impact from other land uses. As identified on Draft EIR page 4-7, odor impacts tend not to be cumulative in nature with odor issues generally limited to within 1 to 4 miles of an odor-emitting source. Therefore, the Cannabis Program Update's contribution to odor impacts would not be cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Special-Status Plant Species and Habitat (Impact CUM-9): The development of permitted cannabis cultivation and noncultivation facilities could involve ground disturbance, vegetation removal, and conversion of wetland habitat, which could result in the direct loss of special-status plants or their habitat. This would contribute to significant cumulative impacts in the Program area. Implementation of Mitigation Measures 3.4-1a, 3.4-1b, and 3.4-1c, as well as compliance with SWRCB Order WQ 2023-0102-DWQ, and Sonoma County General Plan policies, and Sonoma County Code (e.g., Chapter 11 [Construction Grading and Drainage], Article 14 [Standards], Section 11.14.090 [Setbacks for Lakes, Ponds, and Reservoirs], Section 11.14.100 [Setbacks for Streams], and Section 11.14.110 [Setbacks for Wetlands]) would offset the Cannabis Program Update's contribution to this impact because it would require applicants to identify and avoid special-status plants and avoid the establishment of invasive species. Thus, upon implementation of these mitigation measures, the contribution of cannabis cultivation and supply chain uses to cumulative impacts on special-status plant species and habitat would be less than cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Special-Status Wildlife Species and Habitat (Impact CUM-10): Permitted cannabis cultivation and noncultivation activities could result in impacts related to disturbance or loss of special-status wildlife species and habitat. This would contribute to significant cumulative impacts because the Cannabis Program Update could involve ground disturbance, vegetation removal, and overall conversion of wildlife habitat in the Program area where adverse effects on special-status wildlife species and habitat would be significant. Mitigation Measures 3.4-1a and 3.4-2a through 3.4-2q would address these impacts because they would require predevelopment surveys, establishment of protective buffers, and other avoidance measures consistent with the protection measures set forth in SWRCB Order WQ 2023-0102-DWQ, Sonoma County General Plan policies and requirements under the Sonoma County Code (e.g., Chapter 11 [Construction Grading and Drainage], Article 14 [Standards], Section 11.14.090 [Setbacks for Lakes, Ponds, and Reservoirs], Section 11.14.100 [Setbacks for Streams], and Section 11.14.110 [Setbacks for Wetlands]). These mitigation measures would offset the Cannabis Program Update's contribution to cumulative special-status wildlife species and habitat impacts. Thus, upon implementation of these mitigation measures, the contribution of permitted cannabis cultivation and noncultivation operations to cumulative impacts on special-status wildlife species and habitat would be less than cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Sensitive Natural Communities, Riparian Habitat, Old-Growth Habitat, or Other Sensitive Habitats (Impact CUM-12): Permitted cannabis cultivation and noncultivation activities could adversely affect riparian habitat, old-growth habitat, and other sensitive natural communities if they are present on the cannabis operation sites. Implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.4-4, as well as compliance with SWRCB Order WQ 2023-0102-DWQ, Sonoma County General Plan policies, and Sonoma County Code would offset the Cannabis Program Update's contribution to this significant cumulative impact on sensitive natural communities, riparian habitat, and wetland vegetation. This is because it would require applicants to identify and avoid sensitive resources or provide compensation for the loss of habitat through enhancement, creation and management, conservation easements, and other appropriate measures. Thus, upon implementation of these mitigation measures, the contribution of permitted cannabis cultivation and noncultivation activities to cumulative impacts on habitat would be less than cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on State or Federally Protected Wetlands (Impact CUM-13): Permitted cannabis cultivation and noncultivation activities could adversely affect waters of the United States and waters of

the state, such as streams, rivers, lakes, and wetlands. This would contribute to significant cumulative impacts in the Program area. Implementation of Mitigation Measures 3.4-1a, 3.4-1c, and 3.4-5, as well as compliance with SWRCB Order WQ 2023-0102-DWQ, Sonoma County General Plan policies, and Sonoma County Code would offset the Cannabis Program Update's contribution to this significant cumulative impact because it would require avoidance of impacts on waters of the United States and waters of the state. Thus, upon implementation of this mitigation measure, the contribution of permitted cannabis cultivation and noncultivation activities to cumulative impacts to wetlands would be less than cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Migratory Wildlife Corridors or Native Wildlife Nursery Sites (Impact CUM-14): Permitted cannabis cultivation and noncultivation activities could adversely affect resident or migratory wildlife corridors through habitat fragmentation, degradation of aquatic habitat (e.g., streams and rivers), blockage of important wildlife migration paths, as well as destruction or abandonment of nursery sites. This would contribute to significant cumulative impacts in the Program area. Implementation of Mitigation Measures 3.4-6a through 3.4-6d and compliance with SWRCB Order WQ 2023-0102-DWQ, Sonoma County General Plan policies, as well as Sonoma County Code would offset the Cannabis Program Update's contribution to this significant cumulative impact because it would retain features critical for habitat connectivity, protect wildlife from fencing and other material that could cause mortality, and protect wildlife nursery sites. Thus, after implementation of Mitigation Measures 3.4-6a through 3.4-6d and other policies, the contribution of permitted cannabis cultivation and noncultivation activities to significant cumulative impacts on migratory corridors and nursery sites would be less than cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Conflicts with Provisions of an Adopted Local Habitat Conservation Plan (Impact CUM-16): Permitted cannabis cultivation and noncultivation activities could conflict with the Santa Rosa Plain Conservation Strategy (see Section 3.4, "Biological Resources," Impact 3.4-8). This would contribute to significant cumulative impacts in the Program area. Implementation of Mitigation Measures 3.4-1a, 3.4-1b, 3.4-2a, and 3.4-8 would offset the Program Update's contribution to this significant cumulative impact, and no conflict with the Santa Rosa Plain Conservation Strategy would occur; therefore, this impact would be less than significant. Thus, the contribution of permitted cannabis cultivation and noncultivation activities to significant cumulative impacts from conflicts with local policies would be less than cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Historical Resources (Impact CUM-17): Historical (or architectural) resources include standing buildings (e.g., houses, barns, cabins) and intact structures (e.g., dams, bridges). Sonoma County contains several known historical resources, including federally recognized and state-recognized resources. Damage to or destruction of a building or structure that is a designated historical resource, that is eligible for listing as a historical resource, or that has not yet been evaluated could result in a change in its historical significance. However, implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.5-1 would reduce potentially significant impacts to historical resources because actions would be taken to record, evaluate, avoid, or otherwise treat the resource appropriately in accordance with pertinent laws and regulations. Implementation of this mitigation measure would offset the contribution to cumulative historical resources such that impacts would not be cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Archaeological Resources and Human Remains (Impact CUM-18): Under the proposed Cannabis Program Update, existing state and local regulations address requirements for discovery of archaeological resources and human remains, as defined in State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5. New cannabis sites would be required to comply with Sonoma County Code Sections 11.14.050 and 36.20.040, and Attachment A (Section 1, General Requirements and Prohibitions) of SWRCB Order WQ 2023-0102-DWQ, which includes protection measures to archaeological resources. Nevertheless, ground-disturbing activities could result in the accidental discovery and damage to archeological sites. Potentially significant impacts would be reduced through implementation of Mitigation Measures 3.5-2a and 3.5-2b, which would require an archaeologist to prepare a plan that would identify and avoid potential archeological resources within a site, and through implementation of Mitigation Measures 3.5-2c, which would ensure that impacts to tribal cultural resources for projects that are approved through a crop swap application are addressed by requiring avoidance of known tribal cultural resources and archaeological resources and retainment of a tribal cultural monitor during crop

removal and initial ground disturbance if requested by a local tribe. Additionally, if the cultural resource survey prepared under Mitigation Measure 3.5-2a or tribal consultation under Mitigation Measure 3.5-3a indicates the potential presence of human remains, and if deemed appropriate by the County and Tribe, canine forensics teams would be employed to identify the location of human remains, as required by Mitigation Measure 3.5-3b. With application of these requirements, the proposed Cannabis Program Update's contribution to cumulative impacts on archaeological resources and human remains would be less than cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Energy Impacts (Impact CUM-19): The proposed Cannabis Program Update does not include any provisions that address renewable energy or energy efficiency. Therefore, future cannabis cultivation and supply chain uses could conflict with the direction provided in energy related goals of the County's Climate Change Action Resolution. These measures generally align with the statewide direction provided by CEC in the most recent 2023 IEPR, which prioritizes building decarbonization and energy efficiency mechanisms as overarching goals of future building code updated. Implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.6-2 would improve the energy efficiency and renewable energy potential of permitted commercial cannabis cultivation and noncultivation sites through the incorporation of renewable energy systems and offset its contribution to this cumulative impact. Thus, the contribution to cumulative energy impacts associated with the proposed Cannabis Program Update would not be cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Paleontological Resources (Impact CUM-21): Permitted commercial cannabis facility sites are not subject to any requirements to address the potential discovery of a unique paleontological resource. If work is not stopped upon discovery of a paleontological resource, it may become damaged. However, implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.7-4, would protect accidentally discovered paleontological resources by requiring retention of a Qualified Professional Paleontologist to prepare a project-specific PRMMP that would include a pre-construction paleontological site assessment and develop procedures and protocol for paleontological monitoring and recordation, construction worker awareness training, and procedures for discovery of paleontological resources. This would offset the project's contribution to this cumulative impact. Thus, the contribution of adverse effects on paleontological resources would be less than cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Hazards and Hazardous Materials Impacts (Impact CUM-23): Permitted commercial cannabis cultivation and noncultivation operations impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials are associated with the transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials; exposure to existing on-site hazardous conditions; and hazards to the public or environment related to upset and accident conditions. Permitted commercial cannabis facilities would be required to comply with existing state and local regulations (such as Title 26 of the CCR, as well as the US Department of Transportation, California Highway Patrol, and Caltrans, and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Association regulations). However, there may be contamination from previous or historical practices from certain land uses (e.g., agricultural use of pesticides and herbicides), placement of undocumented fill, presence of naturally occurring asbestos, or even authorized disposal of hazardous wastes from prior land uses. Potential contribution to cumulative hazard impacts would be offset through implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.9-3, which establishes soil investigation requirements that would ensure avoidance and proper treatment of hazardous conditions on a site. Thus, the contribution of permitted commercial cannabis sites to hazard impacts would be less than cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Groundwater Resources (Impact CUM-25): There are existing groundwater resources identified in the County's groundwater basins. Of the 14 groundwater basins in Sonoma County, DWR has designated two as medium-priority basins (Santa Rosa Plain and Petaluma Valley) and one as a high-priority basin (Sonoma Valley). Additionally, the County has implemented a groundwater availability classification system. While these programs are intended to address groundwater sustainability, it cannot be stated with certainty that operation of new cannabis facilities relying on groundwater would not decrease groundwater supplies such that adverse environmental impacts occur, including reduced groundwater levels and interference with nearby wells, reduced streamflow, altered habitat of interconnected surface waters, and degraded groundwater quality. However, implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.10-2a requires applicants to demonstrate that adequate groundwater supplies are available to meet the demand of cannabis facilities and

ensure that a cannabis permit would not be granted to applicants if groundwater use would result in or exacerbate an overdraft condition in a priority basin or aquifer, reduced critical flow in nearby streams, or well interference at offsite wells. Further, metering and monitoring are required to ensure that groundwater use for cannabis facilities would not exceed the groundwater use level established for the project. Cannabis uses allowed under crop swap provisions are also subject to metering and monitoring of groundwater use, in compliance with Mitigation Measure 3.10-2b. These mitigation measures would ensure that long-term maintenance of groundwater supplies remain sustainable. Because Mitigation Measures 3.10-2a and 3.10-2b would ensure that groundwater use would be produced in a manner that allows for groundwater sustainability, the Cannabis Program Update's contribution to this cumulative impact would be less than cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Construction-Related Noise and Vibration (Impact CUM-29): Because construction noise is a localized effect, only construction projects that occur close to one another could combine to result in a cumulative noise effect. Cumulative impacts from construction-generated noise could result if other future planned construction activities were to take place within 500 feet of individual cannabis sites associated with the Cannabis Program Update and are of primary concern within proximity of sensitive land uses. Noise associated with the construction of new cannabis facilities would be intermittent and temporary and would fluctuate over the years as new facilities are constructed across the unincorporated County. Mitigation Measure 3.12-1a contains requirements that would regulate the overall construction noise associated with cannabis facilities, including establishing permissible construction noise hours; ensuring proper equipment use; notifying nearby land uses of upcoming construction; locating equipment away from sensitive land uses; and requiring the use of temporary acoustic barriers (e.g., noise curtains). Mitigation Measure 3.12-1b consists of Sonoma County review and required approval of a noise analysis for construction projects anticipated to last longer than one year. There are no other known feasible measures for reducing construction impacts that are not already included in the Cannabis Program Update. However, the extent of these construction-related noise impacts would be short-term and limited to the individual cannabis site and adjacent areas and would not create a regional or countywide cumulative noise effect. Therefore, when combined with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects, the Cannabis Program Update's contribution to cumulative construction-related noise impacts would not be cumulatively considerable.

Construction-related vibration is typically considered a localized impact, affecting only receptors closest to construction activities. Therefore, unless construction of cumulative projects in close proximity to each other (i.e., within 500 feet) occurs at the same time, vibration from individual construction projects have little chance of combining to create cumulative impacts. For these reasons, cumulative vibration impacts from construction are generally less than significant. Vibration associated with construction of new cannabis facilities would be intermittent and temporary and would fluctuate over the years as new facilities are constructed. The extent of these construction vibration impacts would be limited to the individual cannabis site and adjacent areas and would not create a regional or countywide cumulative vibration impact. Therefore, when combined with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects, the Cannabis Program Update's contribution to cumulative construction vibration impacts would not be cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Long-Term Operational Stationary Noise (Impact CUM-31):

Implementation of the Cannabis Program Update would provide a framework for licensing cannabis facilities in specific zones of the unincorporated County, which would have the potential to introduce permanent noise associated with the operation of each facility. Specific building footprints, layouts, and the locations of stationary equipment are currently unknown; thus, it is possible that noise associated with mechanical equipment, cannabis visitor serving uses, and cannabis lounges could be located within distances that expose existing sensitive receptors to noise levels that exceed County noise standards and result in public health effects (e.g., sleep disturbance) at nearby sensitive receptors. Adoption and implementation of Mitigation Measures 3.12-4a, 3.12-4b, and 3.12-4c would ensure that noise levels associated with cannabis facilities are in compliance with General Plan Policy NE-1c and Table NE-2. Through attainment of these noise standards, the cumulative noise impacts related to long-term operational activities would not be significant, and implementation of the Cannabis Program Update would not contribute substantially to a cumulative impact related to stationary noise. The cumulative impact would not be cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Tribal Cultural Impacts (Impact CUM-35): New cannabis uses under the proposed Program could allow for brush removal, grading, and installation of irrigation infrastructure to facilitate the development of cannabis uses. Large structures could be constructed for processing and manufacturing activities, and smaller sheds could be constructed to store materials. While the potential exists for tribal cultural resources to be discovered when soils are disturbed, compliance with SWRCB Order WQ 2023-0102-DWQ require notification to tribes of any new permitted commercial cannabis cultivation and operation activities on tribal lands or tribal cultural resources or within 600 feet of these lands. In addition, compliance with Terms 21 and 22 would reduce impacts to known tribal cultural resources through requiring a sacred lands inventory search through the Native American Heritage Commission, consultation with the tribe(s) affiliated with the area, and implementation of necessary measures to ensure the conservation of tribal cultural resources. In addition, if human remains or suspected human remains are discovered, the permittee shall notify the county coroner and comply with all state law requirements, including Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 and PRC Section 5097.98, to ensure proper disposition of the human remains or suspected human remains, including those identified to be Native American remains. Additionally, Mitigation Measures 3.15-1a through 3.15-1e would reduce potentially significant impacts because tribal cultural resources would be identified and avoided in the first instance, or in the event of an accidental discover be managed consistent with State law, local policies, and the wishes of the affected tribe. These procedures would offset cumulative impacts to tribal cultural resources and ensure consistency with all state law requirements. Therefore, impacts to tribal cultural resources would not be cumulatively considerable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Wildfire Impacts (Impact CUM-40): The county as a whole contains conditions associated with fuels, terrain, and weather that provide for wildfire hazards. Based on the existing wildfire risk in the county and the introduction of additional people into more areas of the unincorporated county, it stands to reason that ignition from arson, electrical power incidents, and equipment use may increase with implementation of the Cannabis Program Update. Because there may be increased fuels and potential for ignition, operation of cannabis projects could increase the risk of wildfires. However, Mitigation Measures 3.17-1a through 3.17-1e place additional limits to uses within sites and requires additional development standards and operational requirements, developed with consideration by the County Fire Marshal and local fire districts, beyond the established State and local obligations. Additionally, these measures would improve access for emergency services to be better equipped to reach an established fire, while also supporting evacuation efforts necessary for public safety. Through these mitigation measures, the incremental increase in fire risk would be reduced to a less-than-significant level because each site would be evaluated individually by the County Fire Marshal and local fire districts to require evaluation and requirements to reduce the potential for ignition through standards for operation of cannabis uses, limit fuels availability in the event that a fire is ignited, and ensure that fire suppression capabilities are adequate to address potential fires before they become catastrophic. With these requirements in place, the contribution of the proposed Cannabis Program Update on cumulative wildfire hazard impacts would not be cumulatively considerable.

1.2.3 Findings Regarding Potentially Significant Impacts that Cannot be Feasibly Mitigated (14 CCR Section 15091[a][3])

This section identifies the significant unavoidable impacts that require a statement of overriding considerations to be issued by the Board, pursuant to Section 15093 of the State CEQA Guidelines. The project would result in four significant impacts (Impact 3.3-4: Exposure of People to Objectionable Odors; Impact 3.8-1: Conflict with an Applicable Plan, Policy, or Regulation Adopted for the Purpose of Reducing the Emissions of Greenhouse Gases; Impact 3.12-1: Excessive Short-Term Construction Noise Impacts; Impact 3.14-2: Conflict or Be Inconsistent with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3[b] Regarding Vehicle Miles Traveled [VMT]); and four significant cumulative impacts (Impact CUM-7: Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Operational Criteria Air Pollutants; Impact CUM-22: Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change Impacts, Impact CUM-34: Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Vehicle Miles Traveled; and Impact CUM-38: Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Water Supply Sufficiency) that cannot be avoided or substantially lessened through feasible mitigation.

Mitigation Measures have been incorporated into the EIR, which mitigate these impacts to the extent feasible, but not to a point where they can be considered substantially lessened so as not to have significant impacts.

The Board finds that there are no feasible mitigation measures that will reduce the identified significant impacts to a level below significant. Pursuant to PRC Section 21081(a)(1) and State CEQA Guidelines Section 15091(a)(1), specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other considerations make any mitigation measures infeasible. Therefore, these impacts would remain significant and unavoidable. However, pursuant to PRC Section 21081(b), the Statement of Overriding Considerations identifies the specific overriding economic, legal, social, technological, and other benefits of the project that outweigh the significant and unavoidable impacts.

EVIDENCE

- a) **Odor (Impact 3.3-4):** The EIR finds that new cultivation allowed by the proposed ordinance could lead to generation of localized odors in such quantities as to be a detriment, nuisance, or annoyance to a substantial number of people. This impact is reduced through the following Cannabis Program Update requirements:
1. Require a structure containing cannabis be equipped with a filtration and ventilation system to control odors, humidity, and mold, except for structures containing only prepackaged cannabis product. The air filtration system shall be sufficient to prevent internal odors from being emitted externally and shall rely on activated carbon filtration, negative ion generation, ozone generation, or other odor control mechanisms demonstrated to achieve the same odor reductions so that odors are not detectable outside the structure. This requirement for odor control is associated with the cultivation and processing of commercial cannabis in Sections 26-18-115, 26-20-080, and 26-26-025(C) (Performance Standards for Cannabis Cultivation and Supply Chain Facilities: Mitigation Measure 3.3-4a).
 2. Require zoning and limitations on development and designated outdoor smoking areas in the vicinity of certain residential areas through implementation of increased permitting requirements, increased setback requirements, and air filtration requirements for cannabis cultivation in Sections 26-18-270, 26-22-120, and 26-26-025 (Special Area Setbacks for Odor Mitigation: Mitigation Measure 3.3-4b).

Implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.3-4a would reduce potential odor impacts through additional requirements for odor control that would be incorporated into the County's standards for cannabis cultivation and supply chain facilities. Mitigation Measure 3.3-4b would require designated smoking areas to be located at the farthest distance possible from an off-site receptor; however, it is not clear how much odor could be decreased through this action because it would be related to site-specific factors, such as the layout of a building, vegetation, and wind patterns. If smoking occurs within 600 feet of a property line, the site must employ technology to reduce and control smoke from substantially crossing to other parcels. If cannabis smoking is allowed indoors, Mitigation Measure 3.3-4b would require air filtration systems that ensure odor is not detectable outside the structure. Compliance with updated performance standards would provide all feasible measures to address and minimize odor impacts. However, nuisance odor impacts may continue to occur due to the infeasibility of ventilation and filtration standards on outdoor cultivation and allowable outdoor smoking at events and lounges. Whether the odor is acceptable and the level at which it should be defined as objectionable vary by the individual sensitive receptor depending on various strengths and distances from outdoor cannabis cultivation sites. Outdoor cannabis cultivation odors at any concentration may be perceptible as far as 2 miles from the source and considered objectionable by sensitive receptors. Given these circumstances and the inability to establish setbacks that would completely eliminate the potential for cannabis odors to be objectionable to a substantial number of people, this impact is identified as significant and unavoidable for outdoor cannabis uses.

No feasible mitigation has been proposed to reduce cannabis odor impacts. Several comments recommend that the proposed Cannabis Program Update include requirements that cannabis cultivation sites monitor odors using Gas Chromatography (used in emission monitoring systems and commonly used for point source stationary air emissions such as industrial uses) and shut down cultivation immediately when terpenes, carcinogens, or odor concentrations reach human detection levels that leave the parcel. Monitoring of emissions would not mitigate

odor impacts. If odor at a site were to measure over a certain level, there would still be no feasible mitigation to stop or capture odors from outdoor cultivation or consumption such that they would not be objectionable to a substantial number of people in all circumstances. Similarly, a site-specific wind and odor analysis may provide additional information, but with the distance that cannabis odors may travel and the subjective perception of whether the odors are objectionable, it would not be feasible to redesign a site such that objectionable odors would be addressed for receptors while retaining opportunities for outdoor cultivation and consumption. Further, the County found there was no reliable science and modeling for outdoor smoke dispersion from consumption.

- b) **GHG Emissions (Impact 3.8-1):** Operation of cannabis cultivation and supply chain sites permitted under the Cannabis Program Update would generate GHG emissions associated with worker commute and customer trips, haul truck trips transporting cannabis and cannabis products and materials, landscaping and fertilizer use, water consumption, waste and wastewater generation and treatment, and electricity use. The Air District recommends that land use development projects implement certain project design features to reduce their contribution to global climate change. These features consist of excluding natural gas infrastructure, including electric vehicle (EV) charging stations that meet the Tier 2 requirements of the most recent CALGreen Code, and meeting the reduction targets under Senate Bill (SB) 743 as mandated by the California Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LCI) (previously known as the California Governor's Office of Planning and Research [OPR]). At this programmatic stage, the County cannot ensure that future cannabis cultivation sites would be constructed to be fully electric or meet the Tier 2 EV-charging requirements given that the rural land use characteristics of the unincorporated area may not be able to feasibly support the infrastructure that would be required in all areas of the county. Additionally, the County is generally preempted from prohibiting the use of natural gas (Cal. Rest. Ass'n v. City of Berkeley (2023) 65 F.4th 1045 (finding a ban on natural gas infrastructure in the city's building code was preempted by the Energy Policy and Conservation Act)).

Section 26-18-155(C)(1)(d) of the County code prohibits the use of generators with the exception of during emergencies. Additionally, CCR Title 4, Section 16305 requires that cannabis cultivation state license holders of indoor, Tier 2 mixed-light, and nurseries using Tier 2 lighting ensure that electrical power used for cannabis activity meets the average electricity greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions intensity required by their local utility provider pursuant to the California Renewables Portfolio Standard Program in PRC Division 1, Part 1, Chapter 2.3, Article 16 (commencing with Section 399.11). Additionally, CCR Title 4, Section 16305 also requires that if a licensed cultivator's average weighted GHG emission intensity, as calculated and reported upon license renewal pursuant to CCR Title 4, Section 15020, is greater than the local utility provider's GHG emission intensity, the licensee shall obtain carbon offsets to cover the excess in carbon emissions from the previous annual licensed period. Although these requirements provide mitigation for on-site energy use, the CCR does not include provisions that align with the design recommendations of the Air District. It is foreseeable that these design requirements could be sufficient to reduce emissions to the degree the additional emissions from not adhering to the Air District's design features could be offset; however, at this programmatic stage, this cannot be assured at the individual project level. In addition, if updates are made to the CCR that align with the Air District's project design features (i.e., all-electric development, mandatory EV-charging requirements similar to the current CALGreen Code's voluntary Tier 2 requirements), future impacts would be minimized. However, specific project design features may be deemed infeasible in the future due to economic constraints or the rural nature of future individual cannabis cultivation sites, which would conflict with the Air District's threshold of all-electric development. Moreover, given the rural nature of portions of the county, it may be infeasible for future cannabis cultivation sites to fully decarbonize due to inadequate access to the electrical grid (Implement Energy Conservation and Renewable Energy Measures: Mitigation Measure 3.6-2). Still, mitigation measure 3.8-2 would require that all electricity used for cultivation be sourced from 100% renewable energy sources, either generated onsite or from providers to on-grid electricity to further reduce potential greenhouse gas emissions.

Furthermore, because it cannot be assured that future sites would be fully electric or meet the Tier 2 requirements of the CALGreen Code as it pertains to EV charging, implementation of the Cannabis Program Update would result in a significant climate change impact. Moreover, the Air District requests that projects achieve VMT reductions

meeting LCI's reduction targets codified in SB 743, which cannot be assured through regulatory requirements or at this programmatic stage (Conduct VMT Analysis and Identify Mitigation for VMT: Mitigation Measure 3.14-2).

Thus, no feasible mitigation has been identified that would reduce these impacts to a less-than-significant level and all feasible mitigation has been incorporated into the program. Therefore, the impact is considered to be a significant and unavoidable impact.

- c) **Noise (Impact 3.12-1):** Implementation of the Cannabis Program Update would result in the construction of new cannabis facilities in agricultural and resource districts, as well as commercial and industrial districts. The specific details of individual future cannabis facilities—such as the location of future cannabis sites, their distances to sensitive receptors, and the need for nighttime construction—are currently unknown. Therefore, it cannot be guaranteed that construction would not take place within 25 feet or 3,931 feet of sensitive receptors (i.e., the distances within which the FTA daytime and County nighttime construction noise thresholds would be exceeded, respectively). In addition, depending on the existing ambient noise levels of the proposed cannabis site and duration of construction activity, construction noise could result in a substantial temporary noise increase (i.e., +10 dBA) in the vicinity of the proposed cannabis facility. Furthermore, if construction were to occur during nighttime hours (i.e., between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.), construction activity could result in adverse health effects (e.g., sleep disruption). This impact is reduced through implemented mitigation measures which would require:
- ▶ Issuance of a use permit or design review with hearing for each cannabis project application involving new construction. To minimize noise levels during construction activities, development of cannabis uses should be restricted to between the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday. All construction equipment shall be properly maintained and equipped with noise-reduction intake and exhaust mufflers and engine shrouds, in accordance with manufacturer recommendations and equip all internal combustion engine-driven equipment with intake and exhaust mufflers that are in good condition and appropriate for the equipment. Additionally, construction maintenance, storage and staging areas for construction equipment shall avoid proximity to residential areas to the maximum extent practicable (Noise Reduction Measures: Mitigation Measure 3.12-1a).
 - ▶ The cannabis permit applicants must submit a noise analysis for ongoing construction projects anticipated to last one year or more, prepared in accordance with the County Guidelines for the Preparation of Noise Analysis. The noise analysis shall demonstrate compliance with the required County noise thresholds through the use of noise-reduction measures and will be subject to review by Permit Sonoma (Prepare Noise Analysis: Mitigation Measure 3.12-1b).

However, these mitigations are not sufficient to reduce noise-related impacts to less-than-significant levels in all circumstances. Because the exact construction activity required, location of future cannabis sites, and their distances to sensitive receptors are currently unknown and because noise curtains may not be feasible in all locations, daytime construction activity in industrial and commercial districts could exceed the applicable noise standard of 90 dBA L_{eq} and construction activity in all districts could result in a substantial temporary noise increase (i.e., 10+ dBA) at nearby sensitive receptors. No additional feasible mitigation has been identified that would reduce these impacts to a less-than-significant level. Therefore, the impact is considered to be a significant and unavoidable impact.

- d) **VMT (Impact 3.14-2):** The EIR found that construction and operation of cannabis sites associated with adoption and implementation of the proposed Cannabis Program Update could potentially result in increased countywide VMT. Therefore, Sonoma County shall require cannabis cultivation and supply chain sites that are located outside of VMT-efficient areas to conduct a project-level VMT analysis and identify VMT impacts associated with the cannabis facility. As a result, this mitigation should reduce VMT impacts by requiring the development of a transportation demand management program that would incentivize employees to choose alternative modes of transportation (Conduct VMT Analysis and Conduct VMT Analysis: Mitigation Measure 3.14-2).

However, given the variable characteristics and location of individual projects to be implemented under the proposed Cannabis Program Update, as well as the uncertainty regarding when a County VMT Reduction Program would be adopted, it cannot be ensured that VMT per employee would be reduced to a level below the

significance threshold of 15 percent below existing countywide VMT per employee. Therefore, the impact is considered to be a significant and unavoidable impact. No feasible mitigation has been identified.

e) **Cumulative Impacts**

An evaluation of the project's cumulative impacts is found in Chapter 4, "Cumulative Impacts," of the Draft EIR. Implementation of the Cannabis Program would be cumulatively considerable and significant and unavoidable in the following areas.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Operational Criteria Air Pollutants (Impact CUM-7): Future permitted commercial cannabis cultivation and noncultivation sites would be required to implement Mitigation Measure 3.3-2, which would amend Sections 26-18-115(C), 26-18-270(C), 26-20-025(C), 26-20-040(C), 26-20-080(C), and 26-20-165(C) of the Sonoma County Code under the Cannabis Program Update to require implementation of BAAQMD's Best Management Practices to control fugitive dust emissions during construction. Additionally, operations would be required to comply with applicable BAAQMD rules and policies, state cannabis regulations, and CCR requirements that address air quality. Section 3.14, "Transportation" identifies increased VMT to the County overall due to the establishment of new businesses. Individual projects may result in substantial increases to VMT, which could affect the cumulative air quality conditions of the SFBAAB. Thus, the contribution of new permitted commercial cannabis cultivation and noncultivation sites to cumulative operational impacts on air pollutant emissions would be cumulatively considerable and significant and unavoidable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change Impacts (Impact CUM-22): The geographic scope of the cumulative impact analysis for GHG emissions and climate change is global. Climate change is an inherently cumulative issue and relates to development in the region, California, and most of all, the world. Whereas most pollutants with localized air quality effects have relatively short atmospheric lifetimes (approximately 1 day), GHGs have long atmospheric lifetimes (1 year to several thousand years). GHGs persist in the atmosphere long enough to be dispersed around the globe. Although the lifetime of any GHG molecule depends on multiple variables and cannot be determined with any certainty, it is understood that more carbon dioxide is emitted into the atmosphere than is sequestered by ocean uptake, vegetation, and other forms of sequestration. The combination of GHG emissions from past, present, and future projects contribute substantially to the phenomenon of global climate change and its associated environmental impacts. Therefore, impacts associated with GHG emissions and climate change are also the cumulative effects of the project. Thus, implementation of the proposed Cannabis Program Update would result in impacts on GHG emissions and climate change that would be cumulatively considerable and significant and unavoidable even with implementation of Mitigation Measures 3.6-2 that would require provisions that address renewable energy or energy efficiency to be incorporated to improve the energy efficiency and renewable energy potential of new cannabis cultivation and supply chain uses and Mitigation Measure 3.14-2 that would identify measures to reduce VMT and associated GHG emissions.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Vehicle Miles Traveled (Impact CUM-34): The VMT impact analysis considers the net effect of the proposed Cannabis Program Update in terms of total daily VMT. It is anticipated that the majority of future commercial cannabis projects would be of a size that would not create a VMT impact and would therefore not be cumulatively considerable. However, due to the programmatic nature of the project, individual projects could potentially result in a significant increase in VMT. As noted above, the 2020 General Plan EIR does not address VMT. However, the Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) projects total VMT to increase but at a slower rate than population and employment growth in the County. That is, VMT and GHG emissions trend downward on a per capita basis: Although total VMT is expected to increase, VMT per person, total GHG emissions and GHG/capita are expected to decrease due to more efficient development patterns, CTP projects, and vehicle fuel efficiency improvements (STCA 2021). Although most individual projects under the Cannabis Program Update are anticipated to be located within VMT Efficient Areas, implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.14-2 would address project-specific details about individual potential projects that are unknown. Mitigation Measure 3.14-2 would reduce VMT impacts by requiring the development of a TDM Program that would incentivize employees to choose alternative modes of transportation. Furthermore, the proposed Cannabis Program Update does not proposed changes to land use designations or zoning districts within the County and

would not include any transportation projects. Rather, the proposed Cannabis Program Update would allow for cannabis businesses to operate in the County within agricultural, resource, industrial, and commercial zoning districts. That is, the types of businesses associated with the cannabis industry are similar to those currently allowed within the respective zoning districts under consideration (e.g., crop production in agricultural districts, retail in commercial districts, laboratory facilities in industrial districts). However, some growth in the cannabis industry is anticipated in the County in response to implementation of the proposed Cannabis Program Update (i.e., economic growth). Therefore, by allowing new uses and implementing the proposed Cannabis Program Update, there are likely to be more trips in the County overall and individual projects may result in substantial increases to VMT. No mitigation beyond that discussed in Mitigation Measures 3.14-2 is available to reduce this contribution of VMT. Thus, the contribution to cumulative total VMT would be cumulatively considerable and significant and unavoidable.

Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Water Supply Sufficiency (Impact CUM-38): According to available UWMPs within the County, some water suppliers (e.g., Valley of the Moon, Town of Windsor, and Sonoma Water) are not projected to have sufficient water supplies during a single dry year scenario, and there is not sufficient water supply to meet increased demand under normal and multiple dry-year scenarios through 2045. In addition, information on supply and demand for the majority of the water retailers within the County is not available, in part because the UWMPA limits requirements for preparation of UWMPs to urban water suppliers that provide water to 3,000 or more customers, or that provides more than 3,000 acre feet (af) of water annually. Due to this lack of sufficient water supplies during normal, dry, and multiple dry years, there is an existing cumulative impact on water supply in the County.

Permitted commercial cannabis cultivation sites would be subject to the water supply documentation, verification of adequate source of supply, and use restrictions requirements provided under CCR, Title 4, Section 16311 and SWRCB Order WQ 2023-0102-DWQ Attachment A, Section 3, Numeric and Narrative Instream Flow Requirements. These standards would ensure that water supply sources are adequate and provided to commercial cannabis cultivation facilities. With regard to noncultivation cannabis facilities, it is unknown what amount of this projected water demand would be met by surface water, groundwater, or municipal water sources for new commercial cannabis facilities. As identified in Section 3.16.2, "Environmental Setting," according to relevant UWMPs, some areas of the County are not expected to have sufficient water under all dry year scenarios. Therefore, it cannot be stated with certainty that adequate water supply would be available to new cannabis uses. However, implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.16-1 would reduce potential impacts on water supply under project conditions because an applicant would be required to either not increase water demand above levels of an existing building or obtain verification from a water supplier that water is available for the project in normal, dry, and multiple-dry years. If these conditions cannot be met, a project will not be approved.

As identified in the 2020 General Plan, sufficient water supplies may not be available to serve all future land uses and development. While individual suppliers can provide the basis for County denial of a project or project until additional water supplies are available, impacts to water supply were identified as significant and unavoidable due to the long-term uncertainty of water supplies and the lack of direct County jurisdiction over public water suppliers (Sonoma County 2006: 4.9-28 – 4.9-29). Thus, because there is an existing cumulative impact on water supply in the County, as identified in the Sonoma County General Plan EIR, and allowable cannabis uses could be located within areas where supplies are not sufficient during all water year conditions, the Cannabis Program Update's contribution on cumulative water supply availability would be considerable and significant and unavoidable.

1.3 Findings Regarding Alternatives

Section 15126.6(a) of the State CEQA Guidelines requires the discussion of "a reasonable range of alternatives to a project, or the location of a project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives."

1.3.1 Evidence

The EIR identified and considered the following reasonable range alternatives to the proposed project, which would be capable, to varying degrees, of reducing identified impacts:

- ▶ Alternative 1: No Project—Continuation of Existing Cannabis Program
- ▶ Alternative 2: Commercial and Industrial Zones Only Alternative
- ▶ Alternative 3: Ministerial Only Alternative
- ▶ Alternative 4: Reduced Scope Alternative
- ▶ Alternative 5: No New Development: Crop Swap and Shop Swap Only Alternative

These alternatives are evaluated for their ability to avoid or substantially lessen the impacts of the proposed project identified in the EIR, as well as their ability to meet the basic objectives of the proposed project as described in the EIR.

ALTERNATIVE 1: NO PROJECT, NO NEW OR EXPANDED CANNABIS USES ALLOWED

Alternative 1 assumes that the existing regulation would remain in place and would not be repealed or otherwise modified from existing conditions. This alternative assumes that there would be fewer commercial cannabis facilities in the county because the regulations under Alternative 1, including those pertaining to allowable uses, setbacks, and parcel size, are more stringent than under the Cannabis Program Update. It is assumed that there would be fewer cultivation uses developed and operated in the County under the No Project Alternative compared to the proposed Cannabis Program Update due to the limits on canopy size (1 acre versus 10 percent of the parcel in Agricultural and Resource zones and by building lot coverage in Industrial zones) and because accessory retail and events would be prohibited. Alternative 1 includes a limited ministerial permitting pathway for outdoor, indoor, and mixed-light cultivation of up to 10,000 square feet, 500 square feet, and 2,500 square feet, respectively. All other cultivation and supply chain uses are subject to a discretionary use permit.

Alternative 1 would reduce impacts related to aesthetics, air quality, greenhouse gas emissions and climate change, hydrology and water quality, noise and vibration, transportation, and utilities and service systems because there would be less development and less cannabis cultivation compared with the Cannabis Program Update. However, impacts would be greater for agricultural and forestry resources and noise and vibration due to potential conflicts with agricultural zoning and smaller setback requirements. This alternative would not achieve objectives related to regulating cannabis cultivation more similarly to other agricultural uses or supply chain uses more similarly to other industrial and commercial uses. A study prepared by Cal Poly Humboldt in January 2024, *Economic Impacts of the Cannabis Industry Northern California Counties*, addresses the value chain associated with cannabis. This study finds that through vertically integrating, industries connect local and regional raw material sources with local processors/manufacturing, distribution, and retail. By allowing for business models that encourage multiple uses within a site, value-added income is retained regionally by encouraging supply chain partner businesses to locate in these counties and purchase locally harvested commodities. Additionally, Alternative 1 would not achieve objectives related to elimination of duplicative regulations, allow for vertical integration of cannabis uses within a site, or make substantial changes to competing and evolving community values and interest. In addition, mitigation measures associated with odors, noise, and other potential effects on public health and safety would not be implemented through this alternative to the extent that they are under the proposed Cannabis Program Update (i.e., the program going forward would consist of the existing County requirements without any updates).

For the reasons set forth above and more fully described in the Final EIR and in the record of proceeding, the Board finds that Alternative 1 is infeasible and undesirable because it fails to meet project objectives related to regulating cannabis cultivation more similarly to other agricultural uses or supply chain uses more similarly to other industrial and commercial uses and objectives related to elimination of duplicative regulations. It also fails to allow for vertical integration of cannabis uses within a site and to make substantial changes to competing and evolving community

values and interest. The Board also finds that this alternative would not avoid significant and unavoidable impacts of the project. Therefore, the Board declines to adopt this alternative pursuant to the standards in CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines.

ALTERNATIVE 2: COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL ZONES ONLY

In this alternative, commercial cannabis uses would be limited to the commercial and industrial zoning districts only. No cultivation or other cannabis uses would be allowed in Agricultural or Resource zones. Cultivation in industrial districts would be limited to indoor. Cultivation would not include a canopy limit, and all uses would be allowed by right, similar to the Cannabis Program Update. Existing cultivation sites in agricultural and resource zoning districts would phase out as permits expire. Under this alternative, cannabis would not be considered a controlled agricultural crop and would instead remain a commercial use. Neither cannabis events nor periodic special events involving cannabis would be allowed.

Alternative 2 would reduce impacts related to aesthetics, agricultural and forestry resources, biological resources, greenhouse gas emissions and climate change, hydrology and water quality, and wildfire. In addition, impacts related to air quality would be reduced (it would eliminate a significant and unavoidable odor impact) because cannabis would only be grown inside and facilities would be equipped with odor control systems. However, impacts would be greater for energy demand and utilities and service systems due to the increased development of indoor cannabis facilities compared with the Cannabis Program Update. This alternative would achieve the project objectives of protecting environmental resources and minimizing environmental impacts and compatibility with residential uses and nonresidential uses through application of mitigation measures included in the Final EIR and zoning and setback requirements. Although this alternative may achieve objectives related to treating supply chain uses more similarly to other industrial and commercial uses, it would not achieve objectives related to regulating cannabis cultivation more similarly to other agricultural uses. This alternative would achieve objectives related to elimination of duplicative regulations and allow for vertical integration of cannabis uses within a site. However, this alternative would not recognize competing and evolving community values and interests related to the cannabis industry and would provide for a limited degree of business opportunities for the cannabis industry compared to the Cannabis Program Update. It would also eliminate outdoor cultivation uses, which is the majority of current cannabis cultivation activities in the county and a source of revenue. As an agricultural product, cannabis contributes to the value of agriculture in the county. In 2024, indoor and outdoor cannabis cultivation production totaled \$12,197,400 (Sonoma County 2024 Crop Report: Cannabis Addendum). Outdoor cannabis cultivation is a key component of the County's cultivation history and remains the largest portion of permitted operators. Allowing outdoor cultivation allows for the furtherance of a Sonoma County-specific brand that can continue to add to the County's strong general agricultural brand that currently benefits wineries, breweries, dairies, and craft food industries. Additionally, establishing an outdoor cultivation site generally requires less start-up costs than an indoor facility, thereby allowing more equitable market participation.

For the reasons set forth above and more fully described in Final EIR and in the record of proceeding, the Board finds that Alternative 2 is infeasible and undesirable because it fails to meet project objectives related to regulating cannabis cultivation more similarly to other agricultural uses, it would not recognize competing and evolving community values and interests related to the cannabis industry, and it would provide for a limited degree of business opportunities for the cannabis industry and economic benefit for the County compared to the Cannabis Program Update. Therefore, the Board declines to adopt this alternative pursuant to the standards in CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines.

ALTERNATIVE 3: MINISTERIAL ONLY ALTERNATIVE

In this alternative, future cultivation and supply chain uses would be allowed without further discretionary review, either by right or with a ministerial permit. Individual projects would not be subject to discretionary site-specific review, CEQA, or public notice and hearings. Ministerial zoning permits require review of the permit application for permit eligibility and verification of the proposed project's conformance with set standards prior to approval. If the

proposed project does not conform to the applicable standards, the permit would not be eligible for approval and would be denied by the County.

Alternative 3 would reduce impacts related to agricultural and forestry resources, greenhouse gas emissions and climate change, noise and vibration, transportation, and wildfire because there would be fewer developed uses constructed on agricultural land, no new development in Commercial and Industrial zones, and no cannabis events would be allowed. However, impacts would be greater for odors. Otherwise, impacts would be similar to those of the Cannabis Program Update. This alternative would achieve the project objectives of protecting environmental resources and minimizing environmental impacts and compatibility with residential uses and nonresidential use through application of mitigation measures included in the EIR and zoning and setback requirements. It includes mitigation measures associated with odors, noise, and other potential effects on public health and safety that would be implemented through this alternative to the same extent as under the Cannabis Program Update. This alternative would also achieve objectives related to supply chain uses more similarly to other industrial and commercial uses and regulate cannabis cultivation more similarly to other agricultural use. This alternative would achieve objectives related to elimination of duplicative regulations and allow for vertical integration of cannabis uses within a site. Overall, this alternative would further business opportunities by allowing for ministerial review and eliminating individual discretionary actions for cannabis uses. However, there has been substantial public interest in how the County regulates cannabis uses. Although the EIR addresses the types of environmental impacts that could result from implementation of this alternative, notification processes and hearings would not be carried out for any cannabis use. This is likely to conflict with competing and evolving community values and interests related to the cannabis industry.

For the reasons set forth above and more fully described in Final EIR and in the record of proceeding, the Board finds that Alternative 3 is infeasible and undesirable because it limits public review of subsequent cannabis applications through the environmental review process and of how the County regulates cannabis uses. Therefore, the Board declines to adopt this alternative pursuant to the standards in CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines.

ALTERNATIVE 4: REDUCED SCOPE ALTERNATIVE

In this alternative, cultivation and supply chain uses would be allowed within the same zoning districts as under the Cannabis Program Update, except that no cannabis event uses (proposed Section 26-18-270, Cannabis Events) or periodic special events that include cannabis would be allowed and only outdoor cultivation with processing would be allowed within the Very High and High Fire Hazard Severity Zones. In addition, because no hoop houses would be allowed under this alternative, no light deprivation would be allowed associated with outdoor cultivation sites. In addition, setbacks for cultivation would consist of 600 feet from every property line, which would result in cultivation on larger parcels (e.g., 33 acres or greater).

Alternative 4 would reduce impacts related to air quality (odors), noise and vibration, transportation, and wildfire because although the overall development potential would be the same, Alternative 4 would require setbacks, would not allow cannabis events, and would restrict development in certain fire hazard severity zones. For other environmental topics, impacts would be similar to those of the Cannabis Program Update. This alternative would achieve the project objectives of protecting environmental resources and minimizing environmental impacts and compatibility with residential uses and nonresidential uses through application of mitigation measures included in the Final EIR and zoning and setback requirements. It includes mitigation measures associated with odors, noise, and other potential effects on public health and safety that would be implemented through this alternative to the same extent as under the proposed Cannabis Program Update. This alternative would also achieve objectives related to regulating supply chain uses more similarly to other industrial and commercial uses. This alternative would achieve objectives related to elimination of duplicative regulations and allow for vertical integration of cannabis uses within a site. However, by implementing larger setbacks from parcel lines, this alternative would not regulate cannabis more similarly to other agricultural uses, which for crops are not subject to any parcel line setbacks. Approximately half of cultivation operators in agricultural resource zones rent and half are property owners. Requiring such a large parcel size would increase barriers to entry for renters and owners alike and reduce potentially eligible parcels. While increasing property line setbacks reduces odor and noise impacts, it decreases opportunities for cultivators to modify their site design to avoid other potential environmental impacts. The Sonoma County Equity Assessment found that

larger parcel size requirements decrease affordability and impose barriers to market entry and recommended more flexibility in zoning and parcel size to address equity in the industry. (Sonoma County Equity Assessment 2022.) Overall, this alternative is more restrictive toward cannabis uses than under the Cannabis Program Update and consequently would not further business opportunities for cannabis uses. Thus, it is likely to conflict with competing and evolving community values and interests related to the cannabis industry. The prohibition of cannabis events would limit tourism opportunities, which can further contribute to the economy by bringing new user groups to the county. In 2024, 4.7 million overnight visitors and 5.8 million daytime visitor trips were made to Sonoma County. Visitors contributed to \$1.5 billion in domestic spending (Sonoma County 2024).

For the reasons set forth above and more fully described in Final EIR and in the record of proceeding, the Board finds that Alternative 4 is infeasible and undesirable because it is more restrictive toward cannabis uses than under the Cannabis Program Update and consequently would not further business opportunities for cannabis uses and economic benefit for the County. Therefore, the Board declines to adopt this alternative pursuant to the standards in CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines.

ALTERNATIVE 5: NO NEW DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVE: CROP SWAP AND SHOP SWAP ONLY

In this alternative, new outdoor cannabis cultivation sites in agricultural or resources zoning districts would be subject to the crop swap criteria of the Cannabis Program Update. No new indoor or mixed-light facilities could be developed under the crop swap provisions; cannabis cultivation would not be allowed on agricultural or resource zoned parcels that have not been in agricultural production within the 5 years prior to application for a permit. No new structures may be developed, and no existing structure may be expanded to accommodate a new cannabis use in Agricultural, Resources, Commercial, and Industrial zones (i.e., shop swap).

Alternative 5 would eliminate significant and unavoidable impacts related to greenhouse gas emissions, noise, and transportation. Additionally, Alternative 5 would reduce impacts to all other resources topics, with the exception of land use planning and public services and recreation, which would result in similar impacts as the Cannabis Program Update. This alternative would achieve the project objectives of protecting environmental resources and minimizing environmental impacts and compatibility with residential uses and nonresidential uses through application of mitigation measures included in the EIR and zoning and setback requirements. It includes mitigation measures associated with odors, noise, and other potential effects on public health and safety that would be implemented through this alternative to the same extent as under the Cannabis Program Update. This alternative would achieve objectives related to elimination of duplicative regulations and allow for vertical integration of cannabis uses within a site. To a certain extent, it would also achieve objectives related to regulating supply chain uses more similarly to other industrial and commercial uses and regulating cannabis cultivation more similarly to other agricultural uses; however, because it allows only reuse of existing agricultural uses and buildings, it would substantially limit further business opportunities for cannabis uses to the extent of other alternatives. A study prepared by Cal Poly Humboldt in January 2024, *Economic Impacts of the Cannabis Industry Northern California Counties*, addresses the value chain associated with cannabis. This study finds that through vertically integrating, industries connect local and regional raw material sources with local processors/manufacturing, distribution, and retail. By allowing for business models that encourage multiple uses within a site, value-added income is retained regionally by encouraging supply chain partner businesses to locate in these counties and purchase locally harvested commodities. Alternative 5 would also restrict the extent of new outdoor cultivation uses, which is the majority of current cannabis cultivation activities in the county and a source of revenue. As an agricultural product, cannabis contributes to the value of agriculture in the county. In 2024, indoor and outdoor cannabis cultivation production totaled \$12,197,400 (Sonoma County 2024 Crop Report: Cannabis Addendum). Overall, this alternative is more restrictive toward cannabis uses than under the proposed Cannabis Program Update and consequently is likely to conflict with competing and evolving community values and interests related to the cannabis industry.

For the reasons set forth above and more fully described in Final EIR and in the record of proceeding, the Board finds that Alternative 5 is infeasible and undesirable. Because it allows only reuse of existing agricultural uses and buildings,

it would substantially limit further business opportunities for cannabis uses and economic benefit for the County. Overall, this alternative is more restrictive toward cannabis uses than the Cannabis Program Update. Therefore, the Board declines to adopt this alternative pursuant to the standards in CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines.

EXHIBIT 1-D

2 GENERAL CEQA FINDINGS

2.1 MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM

Having considered the entire record before the Board and the unavoidable significant impacts of the project, the Board hereby determines that all feasible mitigation within the responsibility and jurisdiction of the County has been adopted to reduce or avoid the potentially significant impacts identified in the EIR, and that no additional feasible mitigation is available to further reduce significant impacts. The feasible mitigation measures are discussed, above, and are set forth in the MMRP that is provided in Attachment A.

PRC Section 21081.6 requires the Board to adopt a monitoring or compliance program regarding the changes in the project and mitigation measures imposed to lessen or avoid significant effects on the environment. The MMRP for the Cannabis Program Update is hereby adopted by the Board because it fulfills the CEQA mitigation monitoring requirements through incorporation into the Cannabis Program Update.

2.2 STATE CEQA GUIDELINES SECTIONS 15091 AND 15092 FINDINGS

According to the foregoing findings and the information contained in the administrative record, the Board has made one or more of the following findings with respect to each of the significant effects of the project:

1. Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment.
2. Those changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency, and such changes have been adopted by such other agency or can and should be adopted by such other agency.
3. Specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other considerations, including considerations for the provision of employment opportunities for highly trained workers, make infeasible the mitigation measures or alternatives identified in the Final EIR.

According to the foregoing findings and the information contained in the administrative record and as conditioned by the foregoing:

1. All significant effects on the environment due to the project have been eliminated or substantially lessened where feasible.
2. Any remaining significant effects that have been found to be unavoidable are acceptable due to the overriding considerations set forth herein.

2.3 BOARD OF SUPERVISORS INDEPENDENT JUDGMENT

The Final EIR for the Cannabis Program Update reflects the Board's independent judgment. The Board has exercised independent judgment in accordance with PRC Section 21082.1(c)(3) in retaining its own environmental consultant in the preparation of the EIR, as well as in reviewing, analyzing and revising material prepared by the consultant.

Having received, reviewed, and considered the information in the Final EIR, as well as any and all other information in the record, the Board hereby makes findings pursuant to and in accordance with PRC Sections 21081, 21081.5, and 21081.6.

2.4 NATURE OF FINDINGS

Any findings made by the Board shall be deemed made, regardless of where they appear in this document. All of the language included in this document constitutes findings by the Board, whether or not any particular sentence or clause includes a statement to that effect. The Board intends that these findings be considered as an integrated whole and, whether or not any part of these findings fail to cross-reference or incorporate by reference any other part of these findings, that any finding required or committed to be made by the Board with respect to any particular subject matter of the Final EIR shall be deemed to be made if it appears in any portion of these findings.

2.5 RELIANCE ON RECORD

Each and all of the findings and determinations contained herein are based on substantial evidence, both oral and written, contained in the administrative record relating to the project. As required pursuant to PRC Section 15091(h), the location of the administrative record will be the Sonoma County Planning Department, and the custodian will be the director of that department.

2.6 RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

In accordance with PRC Section 21167.6(e), the record of proceedings for the Board's decision on the project includes the following documents:

- ▶ the NOP for the project and all other public notices issued in conjunction with the project;
- ▶ all comments submitted by agencies and members of the public during the comment period on the NOP;
- ▶ the Draft EIR for the project and all appendices;
- ▶ all comments submitted by agencies and members of the public during the comment period on the Draft EIR;
- ▶ the Final EIR for the project, including comments received on the Draft EIR, responses to those comments, and appendices;
- ▶ documents cited or referenced in the Draft EIR and Final EIR;
- ▶ the MMRP for the project;
- ▶ all findings and resolutions adopted by the Board in connection with the project and all documents cited or referred to therein;
- ▶ all reports, studies, memoranda, maps, staff reports, and other planning documents relating to the project prepared in compliance with the requirements of CEQA and with respect to the Board's action on the project;
- ▶ all documents submitted by other public agencies or members of the public in connection with the project, up through the close of the final public hearing;
- ▶ any minutes and/or verbatim transcripts of all information sessions, public meetings, and public hearings held in connection with the project;
- ▶ any documentary or other evidence submitted at such information sessions, public meetings, and public hearings;
- ▶ any and all resolutions adopted by the County regarding the project, and all staff reports, analyses, and summaries related to the adoption of those resolutions;
- ▶ matters of common knowledge, including, but not limited to federal, state, and local laws and regulations;
- ▶ any documents expressly cited in these findings and any documents incorporated by reference, in addition to those cited above;

- ▶ any other written materials relevant to the Board's compliance with CEQA or its decision on the merits of the project, including any documents or portions thereof, that were released for public review, relied upon in the environmental documents prepared for the project, or included in the Board nonprivileged retained files for the EIR or project; and
- ▶ any other materials required for the record of proceedings by PRC Section 21167.6(e).

The Board intends that only those documents relating to the project and its compliance with CEQA and prepared, owned, used, or retained by the Board and listed above shall comprise the administrative record for the project. Only that evidence was presented to, considered by, and ultimately before the Board prior to reviewing and reaching its decision on the EIR and project.

2.7 CUSTODIAN OF RECORDS

The custodian of the documents or other material that constitute the record of proceedings upon which the Board's decision is based is identified as follows:

County of Sonoma
2550 Ventura Avenue
Santa Rosa, California 95403

2.8 RECIRCULATION NOT REQUIRED

State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5 provides the criteria that a lead agency is to consider when deciding whether it is required to recirculate an EIR. Recirculation is required when "significant new information" is added to the EIR after public notice of the availability of the Draft EIR is given, but before certification (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5[a]). "Significant new information," as defined in State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5(a), means information added to an EIR that changes the EIR so as to deprive the public of a meaningful opportunity to comment on a "substantial adverse environmental effect" or a "feasible way to mitigate or avoid such an effect (including a feasible project alternative) that the project's proponents have declined to implement."

An example of significant new information provided by the State CEQA Guidelines is a disclosure showing that a "new significant environmental impact would result from the project or from a new mitigation measure proposed to be implemented;" that a "substantial increase in the severity of an environmental impact would result unless mitigation measures are adopted to reduce the impact to a level of insignificance;" or that a "feasible project alternative or mitigation measure considerably different from others previously analyzed would clearly lessen the significant environmental impacts of the project, but the project's proponents decline to adopt it" (State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15088.5[a][1]-[3]).

Recirculation is not required where "the new information added to the EIR merely clarifies or amplifies or makes insignificant modifications in an adequate EIR" (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5[b]). Recirculation also is not required simply because new information is added to the EIR—indeed, new information is oftentimes added, given CEQA's public/agency comment and response process and CEQA's post-Draft EIR circulation requirement of proposed responses to comments submitted by public agencies. In short, recirculation is "intended to be an exception rather than the general rule" (*Laurel Heights Improvement Assn. v. Regents of University of California* [1993] 6 Cal.4th 1112, 1132).

The Cannabis Program Update has been modified since completion of the original Final EIR based on recommendations from the Planning Commission during the hearing that occurred on September 17 and 18, 2025. These recommendations are listed as follows.

- ▶ Policy AR 4-d is amended to expressly not include cannabis in the Right to Farm Ordinance
- ▶ Retain 10-acre minimum parcel size

- ▶ Retain cap of nine dispensary permits
- ▶ Add cap of nine permits for delivery (non-storefront retail)
- ▶ Add a cannabis exclusion combining zone with criteria that would include consideration of inadequate road access, existing residential uses, intense odor from overconcentration, fire hazard, and low water supply.
- ▶ Clarify maximum attendees is per activity day for visitor serving activities.
- ▶ Require a 1,000-foot setback from residential zoning districts
- ▶ Proposed Code Section 26-18-115(C)(4)(h) has been revised to more clearly state that parking lots and storage cannot be expanded beyond the existing site footprint and that roads cannot be added, expanded, or relocated, and to clarify the types of crops that qualify under crop swap.

The modifications recommended by the Planning Commission address how cannabis would be treated in the Right to Farm Ordinances and clarify activities that could be associated with visitor-serving activities and increase setbacks from residential zoning districts to 1,000 feet. Additionally, a cannabis exclusion combining zone would be developed that would prohibit cannabis uses in areas of the county where inadequate road access, existing residential uses, intense odor from overconcentration, fire hazard, and low water supply may exist. As documented in the Errata to the Final EIR, these modifications would not create new cannabis use activity or expansion of proposed cannabis uses under the proposed Cannabis Program Update that are evaluated in Draft EIR Sections 3.1 through 3.17 and Chapter 4. Thus, the environmental impact analysis provided in the Draft EIR adequately addresses these modifications.

In this legal context, the Board finds that recirculation of the Draft EIR prior to certification is not required. In addition to providing responses to comments, the Final EIR includes revisions to expand upon information presented in the Draft EIR; explain or enhance the evidentiary basis for the Draft EIR's findings; update information; and to make clarifications, amplifications, updates, or helpful revisions to the Draft EIR. The Final EIR's revisions, clarifications and/or updates do not result in any new significant impacts or increase the severity of a previously identified significant impact.

In sum, the Final EIR demonstrates that the project will not result in any new significant impacts or increase the severity of a significant impact, as compared to the analysis presented in the Draft EIR. The changes reflected in the Final EIR also do not indicate that meaningful public review of the Draft EIR was precluded in the first instance. Accordingly, recirculation of the EIR is not required because revisions to the EIR are not significant as defined in Section 15088.5 of the State CEQA Guidelines.

2.9 CERTIFICATION OF THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

The Board certifies that the Final EIR, dated September 2025, has been completed in compliance with CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines, that the Final EIR was presented to the Board, and that the Board reviewed and considered the information contained therein before approving the Cannabis Program Update as the project, and that the EIR reflects the independent judgment and analysis of the Board (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15090).

3 STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS (14 CCR SECTIONS 15092[B][2][B], 15093)

The County has evaluated the economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of the project against its unavoidable significant environmental impacts in determining whether to approve the project, and has determined that the benefits of the project outweigh its unavoidable, adverse environmental impacts so that the identified significant unavoidable impact(s) may be considered acceptable. The Board makes the following Statement of Overriding Considerations:

The Cannabis Program Update EIR found the following significant and unavoidable impacts, as discussed in the Findings, above:

- ▶ Expose a Substantial Number of People to Odors Considered Objectionable (Impact 3.3-4)
- ▶ Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Operational Criteria Air Pollutants (Impact CUM-7)
- ▶ Conflict with an Applicable Plan, Policy, or Regulation Adopted for the Purpose of Reducing the Emissions of Greenhouse Gases (Impact 3.8-1)
- ▶ Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change Impacts (Impact CUM-22)
- ▶ Result in Excessive Short-Term Construction Noise Impacts (Impact 3.12-1)
- ▶ Conflict or Be Inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b) Regarding Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) (Impact 3.14-2)
- ▶ Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on Vehicle Miles Traveled (Impact CUM-38)

In accordance with Section 15093 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the County has evaluated the economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of the project against its unavoidable significant environmental impacts in determining whether to approve the project, and has determined that the benefits of the project outweigh its unavoidable, adverse environmental impacts so that the identified significant unavoidable impact(s) may be considered acceptable. The Board has balanced the economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of the project against these effects and makes this Statement of Overriding Considerations, which warrants approval of the project (as modified by incorporation of EIR mitigation measures) notwithstanding that all identified adverse environmental effects are not fully avoided or substantially lessened (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15093[a]). The Board finds that the benefits of the “proposed project outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects,” and therefore, “the adverse environmental effects may be considered ‘acceptable’” (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15093[a]).

Each of the reasons for approval cited below is a separate and independent basis that justifies approval of the Cannabis Program Update. Thus, even if a court were to set aside any particular reason or reasons, the Board finds that it would stand by its determination that each reason, or any combination of reasons, is a sufficient basis for approving the project (as modified by incorporation of EIR mitigation measures) notwithstanding the significant and unavoidable impacts that may occur. The substantial evidence supporting the various benefits can be found in the Findings set forth in this document and in this Statement of Overriding Considerations, the EIR, and in the record of proceedings, consisting of, but not limited to, public comment received at the public hearings held on October 28, 2025.

Pursuant to PRC Section 21081(b) and State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15043, 15092, and 15093, any unavoidable adverse environmental effects of the project (as modified by incorporation of EIR mitigation measures) are acceptable due to the following environmental benefits and overriding considerations which outweigh the significant effects on the environment:

a) Economic Benefits:

- i) State licenses for cannabis businesses require local authorization. Permitting cannabis businesses through the Cannabis Program Update will help ensure the profitability and sustainability of the local economy for the cannabis industry by enabling local cannabis businesses to participate in the state’s regulated cannabis marketplace and will allow the County to retain local land use control. The project provides for an economically viable legal cannabis industry to ensure production and availability of high quality cannabis products to help meet local and statewide demand. The Cannabis Program Update provides a ministerial pathway that creates a more financially feasible opportunity for startups and potential businesses owners who may not have substantial capital. The public policy incorporated into the program focuses on relaxing

the more stringent policies, while still protecting environmental resources, thereby supporting business planning and support.

- ii) Agriculture is one of the main industries in the County and provides a substantial base to the County's economy. Within the County, designated agricultural land totals approximately 326,562 acres, which accounts for roughly 34 percent of the County's total land coverage. The County's General Plan and Zoning Code further divide agricultural land into three main land use categories: (1) Land Intensive Agriculture (LIA); (2) Land Extensive Agriculture (LEA); and (3) Diverse Agriculture (DA). Within the County, land zoned as LIA accounts for approximately 74,255 acres; LEA accounts for approximately 186,462 acres, and DA accounts for approximately 68,845 acres. The total reported value of agricultural production within the County increased by 18.89 percent between 2022 to 2023 (Draft EIR: 3.2-12). However, the value of agricultural production decreased by approximately 9.3 percent between 2023 to 2024, reaching a total of \$857,620,400 (Sonoma County 2025a) As an agricultural product, cannabis contributes to the value of agriculture in the County. In 2024, indoor and outdoor cannabis cultivation production totaled \$12,197,400 (Sonoma County 2024 Crop Report: Cannabis Addendum). In addition to this value, the cannabis industry contributes to the economy further through sales of packaged and manufactured products. Cultivation and supply chain uses associated with the cannabis industry are a source of local jobs, purchasers of supplies, vehicles, and equipment from local businesses; supporters of local service industries; and as regulated, have the potential to increase the tourism industry in Sonoma County. The cannabis industry has direct and indirect economic benefits to the local economy, which substantially contribute to the countywide economy. Furthermore, by expanding cannabis opportunities to business owners in the County, investments in agriculture would be further diversified, which would support continued agricultural land uses in the County. That is, agricultural lands converted from one crop type to cannabis cultivation would ensure that the underlying lands remain in agricultural use rather than being converted to a developed use. This is particularly critical as other agricultural uses face financial struggles and hurdles, particularly the vineyard and wine industry as evidenced by the 2024 Crop Report.
- iii) Agricultural value increases when farmers add value to raw inputs. Services purchased from third-party vendors can be seen as "allied" industries, which use farms and ranches as core clients. The agricultural supply chain for services, retailers, wholesalers, and cultivation connects the regional industries financially. Agricultural industries also build value through their operations, suppliers, and businesses by creating jobs for farm workers who in turn contribute to the local economy through purchasing of goods and services (UCCE 2012). A study prepared by Cal Poly Humboldt in January 2024, *Economic Impacts of the Cannabis Industry Northern California Counties*, addresses the value chain associated with cannabis. This study finds that through vertically integrating, industries connect local and regional raw material sources with local processors/manufacturing, distribution, and retail. By allowing for business models that encourage multiple uses within a site, value-added income is retained regionally by encouraging supply chain partner businesses to locate in these counties and purchase locally harvested commodities (Cal Poly Humboldt 2024). The Cannabis Program Update would allow multiple business types to operate together (i.e., vertical integration), thereby supporting both cultivation and supply chain uses in the County. The value to the business owner to house multiple cannabis licenses within one facility creates a viable pathway for cannabis cultivation, production, manufacturing, and sales to remain within the County.
- iv) Allowing cannabis events would extend allowable uses to tourism opportunities, which can further contribute to the economy by bringing new user groups to the County so they may access to local products at the source. In 2024, 4.7 million overnight visitors and 5.8 million daytime visitor trips were made to Sonoma County. Visitors contributed to \$1.5 billion in domestic spending (Sonoma County 2024). Sonoma and the surrounding counties have world-renowned tourism industries specific to visitors for wineries, including events on winery grounds and at event and conference centers throughout the region. Wineries have strategic alliances with local restaurateurs and hotels to integrate tourism spending and generate regional gains. Cannabis businesses would be allowed to have events that would include tasting, similarly to wineries. This could, in turn, allow for broader alliances among different industry types, such as outdoor recreation and hospitality, which can drive more sales of local products to effectively attract new tourist groups into the county.

- v) Sonoma County Tourism is in part funded by the County with transient occupancy tax (TOT or Hotel Bed Tax) funds. The TOT is authorized under State Revenue and Taxation Code Section 7280. TOT is levied in Sonoma County at a rate of 12 percent. Funds from TOT are allocated to the General Fund, Community Investment, and Measure L, which include fire service projects, fuel reduction and landscape resiliency, regional parks, affordable housing, and road repair and improvements (Sonoma County 2025b). Expanding tourism opportunities to include cannabis uses would increase TOT because attendees from outside the County are likely to stay in transient lodging during their visit.
- vi) Outdoor cannabis cultivation is a long-standing part of Sonoma County's cannabis legacy. Outdoor cultivation still makes up the largest proportion of the County's permitted cultivators (Sonoma County 2025a). An outdoor cultivation site is less costly to establish and operate, thereby reducing barriers for current and potential future operators and thereby increasing equity in the industry. Outdoor cultivation is not only a key component of the County's history, but also of its future. Sun grown cannabis aids in creating a brand for Sonoma County that will help cultivators to be more competitive on the statewide level (or nationally with federal legalization), particularly to compared to areas where building out large industrial space for indoor cultivation is more economical than Sonoma County, which has relatively high real estate values. Enabling outdoor cultivation further allows Sonoma County growers to be eligible for the state appellation of origin program, which can provide growers an additional competitive economic advantage that will benefit the County's economy as a whole

b) Environmental Benefits (legal and social benefits):

- i) Illegal cannabis cultivation has resulted in serious concerns among regulators, environmentalists, and the general public throughout the State. These concerns have resulted in the desire by many agencies, including Sonoma County, to develop and implement regulations as well as enforcement activities that address, control, and minimize environmental impacts from cannabis operations. The Cannabis Program Update relaxes some of the current regulations that limit business opportunities for cannabis facilities, while addressing community concerns, and minimizing environmental impacts through the CEQA process. Overall, allowing more opportunities for cannabis businesses to operate in the legal market reduces the quantity of those that operate illicitly, which will reduce the strain on code enforcement and impacts to the community and the environment through the imposition of zoning code standards and mitigation measures.
- ii) The Cannabis Program Update provides for a minimum parcel size of 10 acres and requires a 1,000-foot setback from residential zoning districts. In addition, the Cannabis Program Update includes a requirement to develop a cannabis exclusion combining zone that can be used to address the concerns of individual communities regarding cannabis uses that may otherwise locate there. These provisions can limit areas where cannabis cultivation may occur in areas where there is inadequate road access, existing residential uses, intense odor from overconcentration, fire hazard, and low water supply. Furthermore, potential conflicts between cannabis uses and residential uses would be minimized by separating these land use types.
- iv) Mitigation measures included in the EIR include more restrictive conditions than under the existing County program. These restrictions include measures that address impacts on aesthetics; air quality; biological resources; cultural resources; energy; geology, soils, and mineral resources; greenhouse gas emissions; hazards and hazardous materials; noise and vibration; tribal cultural resources; utilities and service systems; and wildfire.
- v) By participating in the regulatory system, cannabis permit sites benefit from the involvement of other regulatory agencies, such as the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Water Resources Control Board, and California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, as well as resource identification through consultation with local Native American Tribes. This allows coordination among resource and government agencies and for the County to benefit from coordinated permitting and cleanup efforts on the whole.

4 REFERENCES

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