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~~Public Draft~~  
Final  
Initial Study/Negative Declaration  
North Monterey County Cannabis Facilities Projects

~~February~~August 2022

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# MONTEREY COUNTY

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY

PLANNING

1441 SCHILLING PLACE, 2<sup>nd</sup> FLOOR, SALINAS, CA 93901

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## I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

**Project Title:** North Monterey County Cannabis Facilities Projects

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**File No.:** The project involves ~~five~~seven planning applications, which are grouped into five project sites based on location and applicant for the purpose of this analysis:

1. PLN170282, PLN170284, PLN170285
  2. PLN170263
  3. PLN170225
  4. PLN170321
  5. PLN180109
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**Project Location(s):** Five project locations in the Royal Oaks and Aromas community areas of unincorporated, northern Monterey County (**Figure 1**):

1. 723, 735, ~~745~~ & ~~755~~ San Juan Road, Royal Oaks (PLN170282)  
745 San Juan Road, Royal Oaks (PLN170284)  
755 San Juan Road, Royal Oaks (PLN170285)
  2. 723 San Juan Road, Royal Oaks (PLN170263)
  3. 35 Kortright Lane, Aromas (PLN170225)
  4. 250 Lewis Road, Royal Oaks (PLN170321)
  5. 37 McGinnis Road, Royal Oaks (PLN180109)
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**Name of Property Owner(s):**

1. Eugene and Arlene Tsuji (735, 745, and 755 San Juan Road) and The Eugene Tsuji and Robin Tsuji Revocable Trust and Arlene Tsuji (723 San Juan Road)
2. The Eugene Tsuji and Robin Tsuji Revocable Trust and Arlene Tsuji (723 San Juan Road)
3. Driscoll Business Affiliates LLC (65 Kortright Lane)
4. 214 Lewis Road, LLC (250 Lewis Road)
5. BJSP LLC (37 McGinnis Road)

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**Name of Applicant(s):**

1. Coasta Bella, LLC (723, 735, 745, & 755 San Juan Road; PLN170282, PLN170284, & PLN170285)
2. Gold Coast Gardens (723 San Juan Road; PLN170263)

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3. Coastal Farms, LLC (35 Kortright Lane: PLN170225)
  4. 214 Lewis Road, LLC (250 Lewis Road; PLN170321)
  5. 12/12 Genetics, LLC (37 McGinnis Road; PLN180109)
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- Assessor's Parcel Number(s):**
1. 117-401-021, 117-401-022, 117-401-004, and 117-401-020
  2. 117-401-004
  3. 267-012-009
  4. 117-231-010, 117-231-017, 117-231-021, and 117-231-025
  5. 181-022-005
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- Acreage of Property:**
1. 9.69 acres: Coasta Bella, LLC (723, 735, 745, & 755 San Juan Road)
  2. 7.47 acres: 5.38 acres Gold Coast Gardens LLC and 2.09 acres leased to Coasta Bella LLC (723 San Juan Road)
  3. 55.38 acres: Coastal Farms, LLC (35 Kortright Lane)
  4. 16.72 acres: 214 Lewis Road, LLC (250 Lewis Road)
  5. 5.0 acres: 12/12 Genetics, LLC (37 McGinnis Road)
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**General Plan Designation:** Farming 40-acre minimum (F/40), Permanent Grazing 40-acre minimum (PG/40), and Agricultural Conservation within Coastal Zone (AC-CZ) (Please refer to **Table 1**)

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**Zoning District:** Farming 40-acre minimum (F/40), Permanent Grazing, 40-acre minimum (PG/40), and Agricultural Conservation within Coastal Zone (AC CZ) (Please refer to **Table 1**)

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**Lead Agency:** County of Monterey – Housing and Community Development (HCD) – Planning

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**Prepared By:** Denise Duffy & Associates, Inc.

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**Date Prepared:** ~~February~~ August 2022

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**Contact Person:** Craig Spencer, Monterey County HCD – Planning Division

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**Contact Information:** Phone: (831) 755-5233  
Email: [spencer@county.monterey.ca.us](mailto:spencer@county.monterey.ca.us)

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Figure 1 – Project Location

**Table 1.  
Project Site Information**

Project Site Number	Applicant	APN(s)	Address	Parcel(s) Size (acres) <sup>1</sup>	General Plan Land Use Designation	Zoning
1	Coasta Bella	117-401-021 117-401-022 117-401-020 117-401-004	723, 735, 745, & 755 San Juan Road, Royal Oaks	9.69	Farmlands 40-160 acre minimum (F/40), River and Water Bodies	Farming 40-acre minimum (F/40); portions of one APN are Resource Conservation 40-acre minimum (RC/40) and Open Space (O)
2	Gold Coast Gardens	117-401-004	723 San Juan Road, Royal Oaks	7.47 <sup>2</sup>	Farmlands 40-160 acre minimum (F/40), River and Water Bodies	Farming 40-acre minimum (F/40); portions of APN are Resource Conservation 40-acre minimum (RC/40) and Open Space (O)
3	Coastal Farms	267-012-009	35 Kortright Lane, Aromas	55.38	Farmlands 40-160 acre minimum (F/40), Permanent Grazing 10-160 acre minimum (F/40 and PG/40), River and Water Bodies	Farming 40-acre minimum (F/40); portions of APN are Permanent Grazing 40-acre minimum, visual sensitivity (PG/40-VS) and Open Space (O)
4	214 Lewis Road	117-231-010 117-231-017 117-231-021 117-231-025	250 Lewis Road, Royal Oaks	16.72	Farmlands 40-160 acre minimum (F/40)	Farming 40-acre minimum (F/40)
5	12/12 Genetics	181-022-005	37 McGinnis Road, Royal Oaks	5.0	Agricultural Conservation within Coastal Zone (AC/CZ)	Agricultural Conservation within Coastal Zone AC(CZ)

<sup>1</sup> Acreages provided comprise total parcel area.

<sup>2</sup> Includes 2.09 acres leased to Coasta Bella.



## ***II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECTS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING***

### **A. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECTS**

#### **BACKGROUND**

On November 8, 2016, voters enacted the Adult Use of Marijuana Act (AUMA), which created a state licensing program for commercial, adult-use cannabis activities. On June 17, 2017, the state enacted the Medicinal and Adult-Use of Cannabis Regulatory and Safety Act (Business and Professions Code Section 26000 et se., MAUCRSA), which created a licensing program for both medicinal and adult-use cannabis. MAUCRSA allows counties and cities to maintain local regulatory authority over commercial cannabis activities.

The Monterey County Code (MCC) (Chapters 7.90, 7.100, 20.67, 21.67, and 21.69) requires necessary land use entitlements for all commercial cannabis and outdoor cannabis operations. The MCC is intended to establish criteria for issuing local permits pursuant to the MAUCRSA to establish an effective regulatory and enforcement system, as well as a business tax on commercial cannabis operations.

Pursuant to MCC Chapter 21.67.50 (inland zoning, amended June 2021), indoor and mixed-light cannabis cultivation and cannabis nurseries may be permitted with an administrative permit within the Light Industrial (LI), Heavy Industrial (HI), Agricultural Industrial (AI), or Farmland (F) zoning districts provided that the cultivation occurs within a greenhouse or agricultural support service facility that was permitted or legally established prior to January 1, 2016. On properties that contain one or more greenhouses legally established prior to January 1, 2016, cultivation may be permitted within legally established greenhouses, or within new or expanded greenhouses constructed after January 1, 2016. Agricultural support service facilities used for drying, trimming, processing and storage, may also be constructed to support permitted greenhouse cultivation. In all cases, cannabis uses require approval of an administrative permit, and all new or expanded construction must comply with the applicable regulations of this title. All seven applicants have been questioned about their intent to build new or expanded facilities. None of the applicants have plans to expand at this time. As such, this Negative Declaration does not assume any new or expanded facilities other than the specific improvements described herein.

Pursuant to MCC Chapter 20.67.50 (coastal zoning, adopted March 2018), cannabis cultivation may only be permitted in the Light Industrial (LI), Heavy Industrial (HI), Agricultural Industrial (AI), Agricultural Conservation (AC), or Coastal Agricultural Preserve (CAP) zoning districts with a Coastal Development Permit (CDP). It is the intent of the County to provide for the adaptive reuse of greenhouses in Monterey County and to restrict the proliferation of greenhouses or other structures on productive agricultural lands. To this end, within the AC and CAP zoning districts, indoor and mixed-light cannabis cultivation and cannabis nurseries may be permitted with a CDP provided that cultivation is consistent with all land use designations, and, within the AC and CAP zoning districts, the cultivation occurs only within a greenhouse or industrial building that was permitted or legally established prior to January 1, 2016. Greenhouses and industrial buildings

may be improved for cannabis activities after January 1, 2016, provided that the footprint of the existing greenhouse(s) or industrial building(s) does not change.

Cannabis facilities provide for a combination of cultivation, processing, manufacturing, and distribution of cannabis. Facilities may allow for space for one or all of these stages. The cultivation stage begins with the seeds, immature plants, and “mother plants.” These plants are housed together and maintained for cloning to be used for future growth, as well as for sale to other facilities. Plants are then harvested for seeds or grown to maturity and processed by cutting, trimming, and drying. Dried plants are manufactured by nonvolatile oil extraction or packaged for retail purposes. The packaged products are then distributed for medical or adult-use sale at a retail facility.

The County has received thirteen applications to allow mixed-light commercial cannabis cultivation (Type 1B, 2B, and/or 3B), nursery (Type 4), processing, ~~and~~ manufacturing (Type 6), and/or self-distribution (Type 11), each from different applicants within the northern portion of unincorporated Monterey County. Three of those 13 applicants have been approved by the Monterey County Planning Commission. This initial study is being prepared for ~~five~~seven of the remaining 10 applications. A separate initial study is being prepared for the Moss Landing Business Park. The remaining ~~four~~three applications will require a separate analysis pursuant to CEQA.

The term “mixed-light” refers to cultivation using a combination of natural and artificial lighting. State licensing denotes mixed light license types with a “B” following the cultivation license number. The number in front of the “B” represents different canopy sizes for each state license types with the largest being “3B” (medium) allowing mixed light cultivation between 10,001 and 22,000 square feet (sf) of canopy. Since these project sites are larger than 22,000 sf, multiple licenses will be required from the state until the large (Type 5) license becomes available. Additionally, Monterey County ~~allows~~ permits nurseries (Type 4 state license types) including keeping and selling of immature plants; ~~;~~ cannabis drying, trimming, and processing (~~Type P~~processor state license types), non-volatile manufacturing of cannabis products (Type 6 state license types), and self-distribution of products produced onsite (Type 11 and 13 state license types).

In order to streamline the environmental review process for the ~~five~~seven proposed facilities and to consider the cumulative effects of these projects, this document evaluates potential impacts of all ~~five~~seven projects at five project sites in one, project-level Initial Study. This initial study may be relied on by the County in future permitting of these sites.

## DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED PROJECTS

### **Overview**

The proposed projects are located at five separate locations within the communities of Royal Oaks and Aromas in unincorporated northern Monterey County (County) (**Figure 1**).<sup>1</sup> The proposed projects are located within agricultural areas, generally east of State Highway 1, south of Highway 129, and to the west and north of Highway 156/Highway 101 (**Figure 1**). Four of the sites are located within the inland area of unincorporated Monterey County, and one is located within the Coastal Zone area. The Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs), Monterey County General Plan Land Use Designations, and Zoning for each site are detailed in **Table 2**.

The five proposed project sites contain existing greenhouses and agricultural support buildings that are currently or historically used for various agricultural purposes, including but not limited to, herbs, crops, and cut flowers. All but one site (i.e., 214 Lewis Road) ~~is~~ are currently utilizing the existing greenhouses and other structures for cannabis operations.

The proposed projects require commercial cannabis permits for the ongoing reuse of the existing greenhouses and support buildings for cannabis cultivation, processing, manufacturing, and distribution. Only one project (i.e., Coasta Bella) is proposing new construction as a component of its application. None of the proposed projects would require demolition of existing facilities. The following discussion describes the existing conditions and proposed site improvements at each of the project sites (Source: 3, 39).

The ~~four~~ six inland projects will require the Director of Planning to approve an administrative permit permitting cannabis uses at each of the sites. The proposed site improvements for the one site within the Coastal Zone will require the approval of a Coastal Development Permit. If future development is proposed that differs from what is analyzed in this Initial Study, additional environmental review may be required.

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<sup>1</sup> The project involves seven planning applications, or projects, which are grouped into five project sites based on location and applicant for the purpose of this analysis.

**Table 2.  
Summary of Proposed Projects**

Site	Name	Total Parcel Size (Acres) <sup>1</sup>	Permit Type	Currently Used for Cannabis?	Cultivation (sf)	Distribution (sf)	Processing (sf)	Manufacturing (sf)	Maximum Building Area (sf)
1	Coasta Bella	9.69	1B, 2B, and/or 3B, 4, 6 and 11	YES	164,353	5,672	28,735	1,258	200,018
2	Gold Coast Gardens	7.47 <sup>2</sup>	1B, 2B, and/or 3B, 4, 6 and 11	YES	90,429	N/A	4,946 <sup>3</sup>	N/A	95,744
3	Coastal Farms	55.38	1B, 2B, and/or 3B, 4, and 11	YES	8,512	1,668	1,166	N/A	11,346
4	214 Lewis Road	16.72	1B, 2,B, and/or 3B, 4, 6 and 11	NO	774,870	40,845*	*	*	815,715
5	12/12 Genetics	5	1B, 2,B, and/or 3B, 4, 6 and 11	YES	118,690	3,000*	*	*	126,720**

<sup>1</sup> Acreages provided comprise total parcel area.

<sup>2</sup> Includes 2.09 acres leased to Coasta Bella.

<sup>3</sup> Square footage does not include the new 4,500-sf processing facility proposed to be constructed by Coasta Bella; this square footage included as part of the Coasta Bella processing facility square footage.

\* Combined area of distribution, processing, and manufacturing

\*\*Maximum area includes approximately 5,030 sf of ancillary structures not specifically defined for cannabis facilities

Pursuant to MCC 21.67 and 20.67, within the definition of cultivation, the specific permit types, corresponding to state cultivator license types set forth in California Business and Professions Code Section 26061, are as follows:

Type 1B or "specialty mixed-light" means cultivation using a combination of natural and supplemental artificial lighting at a maximum threshold to be determined by the licensing authority, of between two thousand five hundred one (2,501) and five thousand (5,000) square feet of total canopy size on one premises;

Type 2B or "small mixed-light" means cultivation using a combination of natural and supplemental artificial lighting and having a total canopy size between five thousand one (5,001) and ten thousand (10,000) square feet on one premises;

Type 3B or "mixed-light" means cultivation using a combination of natural and supplemental artificial lighting and having a total canopy area of between ten thousand one (10,001) and twenty-two thousand (22,000) square feet on one premises; and

Type 4 or "nursery" means cultivation of cannabis solely as a nursery.

Non-volatile cannabis manufacturing facilities (requiring a Type 6 state license) may be permitted in the Heavy Commercial (HC), Light Industrial (LI), Heavy Industrial (HI), Agricultural Industrial (AI), or in Farmland (F) zoning districts when combined with a cannabis cultivation permit, subject to an administrative permit in each case. "Manufactured cannabis" or "cannabis product" means raw cannabis that has undergone a process whereby the raw agricultural product has been transformed into a concentrate, an edible product, or a topical product.

Except as provided in [Section 21.67.090](#), cannabis distribution facilities (requiring a Type 11 state license) may be permitted in the Heavy Commercial (HC), Light Industrial (LI), Heavy Industrial (HI), and Agricultural Industrial (AI) zoning districts subject to an administrative permit in each case. Cannabis distribution facilities shall be subject to all of the requirements contained in this Section. "Distribution" means the procurement, sale, and transport of cannabis and cannabis products between entities licensed pursuant to this Chapter.

## Coasta Bella

The proposed Coasta Bella facilities are located on four parcels within approximately 9.69 acres on San Juan Road in Royal Oaks.<sup>2</sup> The parcels are zoned Farmland (F/40) where current operations and proposed facilities would occur. Portions of the parcels are zoned as Resource Conservation (RC/40) and Open Space (O) near the levee and Pajaro River; however, no improvements or new development are proposed within those portions of the site and are located outside of the levee easement. Historically, the site consisted of 224,425 sf of greenhouses and other related structures for the cultivation and distribution of cut flowers. The site is currently developed with 154,390 sf of greenhouses and related structures for the cultivation, processing, and distribution of cannabis. A single-family residence exists on the adjacent property to the south.

The applicant is proposing mixed-light cannabis cultivation and nursery in existing and proposed new greenhouses, and utilizing existing and proposed new agricultural support buildings for processing, manufacturing, and distribution of cannabis products. Infrastructure improvements have been made at the site to convert the existing facilities that once supported cut flower operations to support cannabis cultivation and processing. The applicant is also proposing three new structures as part of the proposed project. The existing and proposed improvements are detailed below; an aerial view of the site and site photos are shown in **Figure 2** and the proposed project site plan is shown in **Figure 3**.

### *Construction*

The proposed facilities would involve the construction of a 16,128-sf greenhouse, 25,000-sf distribution/manufacturing/processing facility, and 4,500-sf processing facility. The proposed 4,500-sf processing facility would be located within the Gold Coast Gardens parcel. All new buildings would have metal roof panels and corrugated metal wall panels. The proposed construction would result in a total of approximately 164,353 sf of cultivation, 29,993 sf of manufacturing and processing, and 5,672 sf of distribution (200,018 sf maximum building area, which is a decrease from historic use).

The site is relatively flat, and the construction of the new buildings would require minimal grading. Construction is anticipated to last approximately eight months, beginning in ~~spring~~fall/winter 2022. Construction would occur from 7 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday. No nighttime construction is anticipated. Construction equipment would include, but would not be limited to, graders, tractors/loaders/backhoes, cement and mortar mixers, pavers, rollers, saws, dozers, forklifts, and air compressors. Traffic during construction would temporarily increase due to worker trips and material deliveries.

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<sup>2</sup> Coasta Bella facilities currently occur on approximately 7.6 acres within APNs 117-401-021, 117-401-022, and 117-401-020, and 2.09 acres within APN 117-401-004 (the Gold Coast Gardens project site). The Coasta Bella project applicant intends to lease 2.09 acres within the Gold Coast Gardens site. This project description includes the proposed facilities within the Gold Coast Gardens parcel.

Figure 2

Figure 3

### *Site Access and Parking*

The project site is accessed by San Juan Road via an existing driveway. The project is proposing minor improvements to the site access, including a paved parking area, repair of existing curb and gutter at the driveway connection, and removal of existing boulders at the entrance. This work will be subject to review and approval of an Encroachment Permit from Monterey County. The proposed project would provide 73 parking spaces throughout the site, including six, paved Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), van accessible spaces (28 parking spaces, including one, paved ADA van accessible space, would be located on the Gold Coast Gardens parcel).

### *Water*

Water for irrigation is provided by an existing private well, and domestic water is serviced by the Pajaro Sunny Mesa Community Services District (PSMCS D).<sup>3</sup> The site is located within the Corralitos-Pajaro Valley Groundwater Basin. Pursuant to MCC Chapter 21.67.050.B.8, water conservation measures would be implemented in order to minimize the use of water where feasible. ~~Drip irrigation would be used for cultivation.~~ Types of water conservation measures that will be incorporated include drip irrigations systems combined with moister sensing technology and moisture retaining soils media. All taps will have signs indicating potable and non-potable water.

### *Wastewater*

Wastewater consists of domestic sewage produced at restroom facilities and process wastewater produced during project operation and maintenance activities, including, but not limited to, wash water. All domestic wastewater would be contained in an on-site septic system, and pumped and hauled out to an approved wastewater treatment facility by a registered liquid waste hauler. Process wastewater would be disposed of in compliance with the State Water Resources Control Board, ORDER WQ 2019-0001-DWQ, General Waste Discharge Requirements And Waiver Of Waste Discharge Requirements For Discharges Of Waste Associated With Cannabis Cultivation Activities (Cannabis General Order), as discussed in Section 10, Hydrology and Water Quality. Septic improvements are proposed at this project location and would include leach fields and septic tanks as shown on the project site plan. Three new restrooms are proposed: one in the new proposed 4,500-sf processing building and two in the new proposed 25,000-sf processing and manufacturing building.

### *Drainage*

A stormwater retention pond is proposed on the northern portion of the site. The applicant would inspect and maintain the existing drainage culverts as necessary. The proposed new buildings, paved parking spaces, and other improvements would result in an increase of approximately 50,000 sf of new impervious surface.

The Coasta Bella site is located adjacent to the levee associated with the Pajaro River; however, there are no proposed improvements that would affect the levee or located within the levee easement. Due to the site's proximity to the Pajaro River, the site is located within Special Flood Hazard Area Zones AO and AE, according to Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) (please refer to Section 10, Hydrology and Water Quality, for more detailed information). The

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<sup>3</sup> The well is located on APN 117-401-004 (the Gold Coast Gardens parcel).



proposed new buildings would be elevated above the floodplain at an elevation of approximately 35 feet.

#### *Solid Waste*

All waste will be disposed of per local, California, and federal regulations. Waste Management is currently providing waste disposal and recycling services for non-cannabis waste. Recycling and regular waste are stored in receptacles on site until transported by Waste Management to a waste management facility.

Because trim would be sold to licensed manufacturers for extraction and used by the applicant for extraction, it is anticipated that there would be very little green waste. There would be no psychoactive waste contained in the green waste.

Cannabis waste disposal procedures would comply with Division 30, Sections 40141 and 42649.8(d) of the Public Resources (PRC). In addition, pursuant to Department of Cannabis Control (DCC) regulations 16309(a)(2) and 17223, the applicant has prepared a cannabis waste management plan, which may include composting cannabis waste. All composted cannabis waste would be done in compliance with Title 14 of the CCR at Chapter 3.1, commencing with Section 17850.

#### *Lighting & Security*

As part of proposed security measures, the project would include the installation of outdoor lighting as identified in the project's Security Plan, which is required by Business and Professions Code Section 26070 and MCC Chapter 7.90. New outdoor lighting would ensure the safety of persons and protect the premises from theft and other crimes. Outdoor lighting would be downward facing, shielded to direct light downwards to ensure that lighting does not spill over onto nearby properties, and would be consistent with local lighting ordinances and DCC regulations.

Minimal motion-sensing, downward facing (shielded) lighting would be used for security purposes. The property currently has 10 security cameras for monitoring of the parking area, exterior, and greenhouse interiors. An existing 6-foot-high chain link security fence with razor wire top encloses the property with Knox Box access. Locked gates would have a lock box or other acceptable means for immediate access by emergency equipment. A new security shed is proposed at the entrance in the parking area.

In addition to security lighting, cannabis cultivation requires various lighting treatments at different stages in the process. The growth stage requires a minimum of 12 hours of light. Greenhouses would be retrofitted with mechanical curtains to block light during periods with longer hours of daylight (i.e., summer). Conversely, greenhouses would be retrofitted with electrical LED lighting to provide supplemental light during period of limited natural light (i.e., winter). The existing greenhouses employ, and proposed greenhouses will employ, shielding and/or blackout tarps that prevent interior light from escaping between sunset and sunrise, as required per DCC regulations 16304(a)(7).

### *Energy*

Cultivation equipment, particularly lighting and climate control equipment required for mixed-light operations, requires a relatively large amount of energy (primarily electric) for operation. Energy use for mixed-light operations include LED lighting, dehumidification to remove water vapor and avoid mold formation, space heating or cooling during non-illuminated periods and drying processes, preheating of irrigation water, generation of CO<sub>2</sub> from fossil fuel combustion, and ventilation and air condition to remove waste heat (Source: 42). Lighting is the greatest contributor to energy use (Source: 42). However, the project is proposing mixed-light operations, which uses less energy than indoor grow facilities. Reliance on equipment can vary widely depending on plant spacing, layout, and the surrounding climate at a given facility. Generators would provide emergency backup power in the event of a power outage. Ventilation systems with odor prevention measures would be installed, as needed, for plant cultivation, post-harvest production, and processing.

### *Utilities*

The site is served by Central Coast Community Energy (CCCE) (formerly Monterey Bay Community Power) for electricity and Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) for natural gas.

### *Landscaping*

No existing trees are proposed for removal. Trees would be maintained as necessary to improve access and visibility.

### *Fire Protection*

The facilities would be fully protected with automatic fire sprinkler systems, fire extinguishers, and alarm systems, as required under the fire and building codes. Access roads would be constructed to provide a minimum width of 20 feet with an unobstructed vertical clearance not less than 15 feet to allow for emergency fire vehicles and equipment.

### *Operations*

The applicant proposes commercial cannabis cultivation, nursery, manufacturing, and distribution, in accordance with MCC and DCC regulations. Mixed-light cannabis cultivation would occur in the existing and proposed greenhouses. Drying, curing, trimming, extraction, and distribution activities would occur in the existing and proposed agricultural support buildings on-site. The applicant intends to extract oil using a CO<sub>2</sub> and/or ethanol non-volatile process. Ethanol would be used in the winterization process. The applicant would distribute its own product to licensed cultivators, manufacturers, distributors, and retailers.

The hours of operation during which staff would be present would be 24 hours per day, 7 days a week. Deliveries would be accepted during regular business hours Monday through Friday, 6:00 am to 10:00 pm. The facility would be closed to the public; only scheduled, business-related deliveries or visitors would be permitted on-site.

The cultivation stage of cannabis operations requires minimal staffing. This facility would require 10 employees for the proposed cannabis operations. Plants are watered by drip irrigation and light is controlled by timers and mechanical curtains during the growth stage. The processing stage

typically requires additional seasonal staff to process the plants (i.e., cutting, trimming, and drying), approximately 10-20 additional staff. The dried product is packaged on-site and prepared for distribution. In addition, some plants may be cut into smaller plants and cloned for distribution to other facilities.

The facility has approximately six visitors per week, and the frequency of deliveries, including mail, delivery of supplies, and vendors is approximately two to five vehicles deliveries per week. The types of delivery vehicles include cars, cargo vans, pickup trucks, small delivery trucks, and refrigerated semi-trailers, depending on the type and size of delivery. It is anticipated that most of the deliveries of products and supplies into and out of the facilities would be relatively small and that delivery vehicles would be no larger than a small truck. Loading spaces are identified on the site plans.

### **Gold Coast Gardens**

The proposed Gold Coast Gardens' facilities are located on a 7.5-acre parcel on San Juan Road in Royal Oak, of which, approximately 2.09 acres would be leased to the Coasta Bella applicant for the construction and operation of a proposed 4,500-sf processing facility and parking (please refer to Coasta Bella project description, above). The remaining parcel consists of 2.20 acres of levee/river area and 3.18 acres of existing greenhouses and other related facilities used historically for cut flower cultivation. The 2.20-acre levee area is zoned RC/40 and O, and is located near the Pajaro River. No uses are proposed on the RC/40 or O zoned portions of the site, and operations would be concentrated within the 3.18 acres of existing facilities, which is zoned F/40. A single-family residence exists within the project site in the parcel at the project's entrance, and a single-family residence also exists on the adjacent property to the south.

The site is currently developed with three greenhouses totaling approximately 90,429 sf, one 4,946-sf agricultural support building, and one 440-sf office building (95,744 sf maximum total building area). The property is currently used for nursery, cultivation, processing, and distribution of cannabis. The applicant is undertaking mixed-light cannabis cultivation and nursery in the existing greenhouses, and utilizing the existing agricultural support building for processing, and distribution of cannabis products. Infrastructure improvements have been made at the site to convert the existing facilities that once supported cut flower operations to support cannabis cultivation and processing. No new structures are proposed as part of the project. The existing and proposed improvements are detailed below; an aerial view of the site and site photos are shown in **Figure 4** and the proposed project site plan is shown in **Figure 5**.

#### *Construction*

As described in the Coasta Bella project description above, the Coasta Bella applicant is proposing to lease 2.09 acres of the Gold Coast Gardens parcel and construct a 4,500-sf processing facility and 28 parking spaces.

Figure 4

Figure 5

### *Site Access and Parking*

The project site is accessed by San Juan Road via an existing, private 80-foot-wide driveway and paved access road that runs along the eastern boundary of the property. The site currently provides nine, paved parking spaces.

### *Water*

Water for irrigation is provided by an existing on-site private well, and domestic water is serviced by the PSMCSD via service connection and meter located near the site entrance. The site is located within the Corralitos-Pajaro Valley Groundwater Basin. The two existing 5,000-gallon (g) water storage tanks on-site would be used for the proposed cannabis operations. Pursuant to MCC Chapter 21.67.050.B.8, water conservation measures would be implemented in order to minimize the use of water where feasible. Electronic controlled Drip irrigation would be used for cultivation rather than less efficient sprinkler systems. All taps will have signs indicating potable and non-potable water. Water quality test for the on-site well show that the water meets Title 22 drinking water standards.

### *Wastewater*

Wastewater consists of domestic sewage produced at restroom facilities and process wastewater produced during project operation and maintenance activities, including, but not limited to, wash water. All domestic wastewater would be contained in an on-site septic system, and pumped and hauled out to an approved wastewater treatment facility by a registered liquid waste hauler. Process wastewater would be disposed of in compliance with the Cannabis General Order, as discussed in Section 10, Hydrology and Water Quality. A restroom is currently located in the office building between the two greenhouses. Septic improvements are proposed at this project location and would include leach fields and septic tanks as shown on the site plan (please refer to Section 19, Utilities and Service Systems for more detailed information).

### *Drainage*

There would be no changes to the existing drainage pattern as a result of the proposed project as no new construction is proposed. No drainage improvements are necessary or proposed at this time. The applicant would inspect and maintain the existing drainage culverts as necessary. Due to the site's proximity to the Pajaro River, the site is located within Special Flood Hazard Area Zone AO according to FEMA (please refer to Section 10, Hydrology and Water Quality, for more detailed information). No increase in impervious surface would result from the proposed project.

### *Solid Waste*

All waste will be disposed of per local, California, and federal regulations. Waste Management is currently providing waste disposal and recycling services for non-cannabis waste. Recycling and regular waste are stored in receptacles on site until transported by Waste Management to a waste management facility.

Cannabis waste disposal procedures would comply with Division 30, Sections 40141 and 42649.8(d) of the PRC. In addition, pursuant to DCC regulations 16309(a)(2) and 17223, the applicant has prepared a cannabis waste management plan, which may include composting cannabis waste. All composted cannabis waste would be done in compliance with Title 14 of the

CCR at Chapter 3.1, commencing with Section 17850. The County does not allow for burning of cannabis waste on the project site.

### *Lighting & Security*

As part of proposed project security measures, the project would include the installation of outdoor lighting as identified in the project's Security Plan, which is required by Business and Professions Code Section 26070 and MCC Chapter 7.90. New outdoor lighting would ensure the safety of persons and protect the premises from theft and other crimes. Outdoor lighting would be downward facing, shielded to direct light downwards to ensure that lighting does not spill over onto nearby properties, and would be consistent with local lighting ordinances and DCC regulations.

Minimal motion-sensing, downward facing (shielded) lighting would be used for security purposes. The property has 10 security cameras for monitoring of the parking area, exterior, and greenhouse interior. An existing 6-foot-high chain link security fence with razor wire top encloses the property with Knox Box access. Locked gates would have a lock box or other acceptable means for immediate access by emergency equipment.

In addition to security lighting, cannabis cultivation requires various lighting treatments at different stages in the process. The growth stage requires a minimum of 12 hours of light. Greenhouses would be retrofitted with mechanical curtains to block light during periods with longer hours of daylight (i.e., summer). Conversely, greenhouses would be retrofitted with electrical LED lighting to provide supplemental light during period of limited natural light (i.e., winter). The existing greenhouses employ shielding and/or blackout tarps that prevent interior light from escaping between sunset and sunrise, as required per DCC regulation 16304(a)(7).

### *Energy*

Cultivation equipment, particularly lighting and climate control equipment required for mixed-light operations, requires a relatively large amount of energy (primarily electric) for operation. Energy use for mixed-light operations include LED lighting, dehumidification to remove water vapor and avoid mold formation, space heating or cooling during non-illuminated periods and drying processes, preheating of irrigation water, generation of CO<sub>2</sub> from fossil fuel combustion, and ventilation and air condition to remove waste heat (Source: 42). Lighting is the greatest contributor to energy use (Source: 42). However, the project is proposing mixed-light operations, which uses less energy than indoor grow facilities. Reliance on equipment can vary widely depending on plant spacing, layout, and the surrounding climate at a given facility. Generators would provide emergency backup power production in the event of a power outage. Odor control measures such as ventilation systems, filters and and/or odor-neutralizers would be installed, as needed, for plant cultivation, post-harvest production, and processing.

### *Utilities*

The site is served by CCCE for electricity and PG&E for natural gas.

### *Landscaping*

No existing trees are proposed for removal. Trees would be maintained as necessary to improve access and visibility.

### *Fire Protection*

The facilities would be fully protected with automatic fire sprinkler systems, fire extinguishers, and alarm systems, as required under the fire and building codes. Access roads would be constructed to provide a minimum width of 20 feet with an unobstructed vertical clearance not less than 15 feet to allow for emergency fire vehicles and equipment.

### *Operations*

The applicant proposes commercial cannabis cultivation, nursery, and distribution, in accordance with MCC and DCC regulations. Mixed-light cannabis cultivation would occur in the existing greenhouses. Drying, curing, trimming, extraction, and distribution activities would occur in the existing agricultural support buildings on-site. The applicant intends to extract oil using a CO<sub>2</sub> and/or ethanol non-volatile process. Ethanol would be used in the winterization process. The applicant would distribute its own product to licensed cultivators, manufacturers, distributors, and retailers.

The hours of operation during which staff would be present would include Monday through Friday, 7:00 AM to 3:30 PM. Deliveries would be accepted during regular business hours. The facility would be closed to the public; only scheduled, business-related deliveries or visitors would be permitted on-site.

The cultivation stage of cannabis operations requires minimal staffing. This facility would require 10 employees for the proposed cannabis operations. Plants are watered by drip irrigation and light is controlled by timers and mechanical curtains during the growth stage. The processing stage typically requires additional seasonable staff to process the plants (i.e., cutting, trimming, and drying), approximately 10-20 additional staff. The dried product is packaged on-site and prepared for distribution. In addition, some plants may be cut into smaller plants and cloned for distribution to other facilities.

The facility has approximately six visitors per week, and the frequency of deliveries, including mail, delivery of supplies, and vendors is approximately two to five vehicles deliveries per week. The types of delivery vehicles include cars, cargo vans, pickup trucks, small delivery trucks, and refrigerated semi-trailers, depending on the type and size of delivery. It is anticipated that most of the deliveries of products and supplies into and out of the facilities would be relatively small and that delivery vehicles would be no larger than a small truck. Loading spaces are identified on the site plans.

### **Coastal Farms**

The 55.38-acre project site is currently and has historically been used for flower and berry production. The northeastern portion of the site to be leased by the applicant and used for commercial cannabis was previously used for the cultivation of persimillas. The remainder of the



site will continue to be used for berry production by the property owner. There is an existing residence (non-cannabis use) and agricultural warehouses (non-cannabis use) on-site, which would remain and are not part of the proposed project. The parcel is zoned F/40 and PG/40; however, no uses are proposed within the PG/40 portion of the parcel.

The applicant currently leases and occupies two existing greenhouses on the property, totaling approximately 8,512 sf. There is an existing 1,166 sf processing building, 1,668 sf distribution building, and some ancillary buildings on-site (i.e., office and storage buildings). The existing office has storage and a restroom. Maximum building area would total approximately 11,346 sf. The applicant is proposing mixed-light cannabis cultivation and nursery in the existing greenhouses, and utilizing the existing agricultural support buildings for processing and distribution of cannabis products. Infrastructure improvements have been made at the site to convert the existing facilities that once supported cut flower and berry operations to support cannabis cultivation and processing. The existing and proposed improvements are detailed below; an aerial view of the site and site photos are shown in **Figure 6** and the proposed project site plan is shown in **Figure 7**.

#### *Site Access and Parking*

The site is accessed via a private, paved road at Kortright Lane and Aromas Road. The private road is approximately 22-foot wide and paved for approximately 3,425 lineal feet from Aromas Road with the remaining distance of 625 lineal feet comprised of decomposed granite aggregate. There are many large tractor-trailer turnabouts on the property as it is an active farm. There are four parking spaces on-site and a total of six spaces proposed, which is sufficient for the small operation proposed.

#### *Water*

The project site is served by permitted water system Aromas Rd WS #03. Irrigation and domestic water are served by this water system. The site is located within the Corralitos-Pajaro Valley Groundwater Basin. The project site is served by two existing wells. The smaller of the two supplies the existing greenhouses and outbuildings. The applicant utilizes a 3,000-gallon water storage tank, as well as six, 500-gallon fertilizer tanks. Two new storage tanks with 5,000-gallon capacity each are proposed for fire and irrigation water storage for the proposed project. Each greenhouse on the water system features its own water meter. Pursuant to MCC Chapter 21.67.050.B.8, water conservation measures would be incorporated in order to minimize the use of water where feasible. ~~Drip irrigation would be used for cultivation~~ Types of water conservation measures that will be incorporated include drip irrigations systems combined with moisture sensing technology and moisture retaining soils media. Water quality tests for the on-site wells show that the water meets Title 22 drinking water standards. All taps will have signs indicating potable and non-potable water.

Figure 6

Figure 7

### *Wastewater*

Wastewater consists of domestic sewage produced at restroom facilities and process wastewater produced during project operation and maintenance activities, including but not limited to wash water. All domestic wastewater would be contained in an on-site septic system, and pumped and hauled out to an approved wastewater treatment facility by a registered liquid waste hauler. Process wastewater would be disposed of in compliance with the Cannabis General Order, as discussed in Section 10, Hydrology and Water Quality. A restroom is currently located in the office building. The existing septic tank has a capacity of 1,500 gallons per day, which provides for 5-day retention. In addition, leach fields have been sized and located within an area of 540 sf, which exceeds the minimum size of 500 sf based on wastewater generation of 150 gallons per day.

### *Drainage*

All runoff that does occur would be collected and evaporated off passively. No changes to existing drainage pattern are proposed. No drainage improvements are necessary or proposed at this time. The applicant would inspect and maintain the existing drainage culverts as necessary. No increase in impervious surface would result from the proposed project.

### *Solid Waste*

All waste will be disposed of per local, California, and federal regulations. Waste Management is currently providing waste disposal and recycling services for non-cannabis waste. Recycling and regular waste are stored in receptacles on site until transported by Waste Management to a waste management facility. Green waste is self-hauled.

Cannabis waste disposal procedures would comply with Division 30, Sections 40141 and 42649.8(d) of the PRC. In addition, pursuant to DCC regulations 16309(a)(2) and 17223, the applicant has prepared a cannabis waste management plan, which may include composting cannabis waste. All composted cannabis waste would be done in compliance with Title 14 of the CCR at Chapter 3.1, commencing with Section 17850. The County does not allow for burning of cannabis waste on the project site.

### *Lighting/Security*

As part of proposed project security measures, the project would include the installation of outdoor lighting as identified in the project's Security Plan, which is required by Business and Professions Code Section 26070 and MCC Chapter 7.90. New outdoor lighting would ensure the safety of persons and protect the premises from theft and other crimes. Outdoor lighting would be downward facing, shielded to direct light downwards to ensure that lighting does not spill over onto nearby properties, and would be consistent with local lighting ordinances and DCC regulations.

Minimal motion-sensing, downward facing (shielded) lighting would be used for security purposes. Security on the site currently consists of a 16 camera DVR with motion sensors, email alerts, text alerts, and live video. The perimeter is securely fenced with a 6-foot high, barbed wire fence with multiple security gates. There is a second locked security gate between the public and the drying/secure storage unit. Locked gates would have a lock box or other acceptable means for immediate access by emergency equipment.

In addition to security lighting, cannabis cultivation requires various lighting treatments at different stages in the process. The growth stage requires a minimum of 12 hours of light. Greenhouses would be retrofitted with mechanical curtains to block light during periods with longer hours of daylight (i.e., summer). Conversely, greenhouses would be retrofitted with electrical LED lighting to provide supplemental light during period of limited natural light (i.e., winter). The existing greenhouses employ shielding and/or blackout tarps that prevent interior light from escaping between sunset and sunrise, as required per DCC regulation 16304(a)(7).

### *Energy*

Cultivation equipment, particularly lighting and climate control equipment required for mixed-light operations, requires a relatively large amount of energy (primarily electric) for operation. Energy use for mixed-light operations include LED lighting, dehumidification to remove water vapor and avoid mold formation, space heating or cooling during non-illuminated periods and drying processes, preheating of irrigation water, generation of CO<sub>2</sub> from fossil fuel combustion, and ventilation and air condition to remove waste heat (Source: 42). Lighting is the greatest contributor to energy use (Source: 42). However, the project is proposing mixed-light operations, which uses less energy than indoor grow facilities. Reliance on equipment can vary widely depending on plant spacing, layout, and the surrounding climate at a given facility. Generators would provide emergency backup power in the event of a power outage. Odor control measures such as ventilation systems, filters and and/or odor-neutralizers would be installed, as needed, for plant cultivation, post-harvest production, and processing.

### *Utilities*

The site is served by CCCE for electricity and PG&E for natural gas.

### *Landscaping*

The site contains some landscaping at the entrances and at the existing residence. No new landscaping is proposed, and no existing trees would be removed. Trees would be maintained as necessary to improve access and visibility.

### *Fire Protection*

The facilities would be fully protected with automatic fire sprinkler systems, fire extinguishers, and alarm systems, as required under the fire and building codes. Access roads would be constructed to provide a minimum width of 20 feet with an unobstructed vertical clearance not less than 15 feet to allow for emergency fire vehicles and equipment.

### *Operations*

The applicant proposes commercial cannabis cultivation, nursery, and distribution, in accordance with MCC and DCC regulations. Mixed-light cannabis cultivation would occur in the existing greenhouses. Drying, curing, trimming, and distribution activities would occur in the existing agricultural support buildings on-site. The applicant would distribute its own product to licensed cultivators, manufacturers, distributors, and retailers.

The hours of operation which staff would be present would be between 6:00 am to 8:00 pm, Monday through Saturday, and Sundays, when necessary. Deliveries would be accepted during

business hours Monday through Friday. The facility would be closed to the public; only scheduled, business-related deliveries or visitors would be permitted on site.

The cultivation stage of cannabis operations requires minimal staffing. This project would require six employees; four would manage the growing operations, and two employees would manage the production operations. Plants are watered by drip irrigation and light is controlled by timers and mechanical curtains during the growth stage. The processing stage typically requires additional seasonal staff to process the plants (i.e., cutting, trimming, and drying), approximately 10-20 additional staff. The dried product is packaged on-site and prepared for distribution. In addition, some plants may be cut into smaller plants and cloned for distribution to other facilities.

The facility has approximately one visitor per week, and the frequency of deliveries, including mail, delivery of supplies, and vendors is approximately one per day, five days a week. The types of delivery vehicles include cars, cargo vans, pickup trucks, small delivery trucks, and refrigerated semi-trailers, depending on the type and size of delivery. It is anticipated that most of the deliveries of products and supplies into and out of the facilities would be relatively small and that delivery vehicles would be no larger than a small truck. Loading spaces are identified on the site plans.

## **214 Lewis Road**

The 214 Lewis Road project site consists of four parcels totaling approximately 16.72 acres, which are zoned F/40. The property is currently being used for nursery and cultivation of herbs, floral products, and vegetables. The site currently contains approximately 774,870 sf of greenhouses and 40,845 sf of agricultural support buildings, as well as various small buildings on the property for ancillary uses. No new structures are proposed as part of the project. There is an existing single-family residence located adjacent to the project site, but is not part of the proposed project.

Minimal proposed improvements to an existing building on the site include the addition of new accessible restroom and signage, new restroom and locker rooms, addition of security office within the building, new 3-foot-wide door, security cameras, and exterior lighting. In addition, a new security fence is proposed along the perimeter of the site, along with a new security gate located off Lewis Road. The existing and proposed improvements are detailed below; an aerial view of the site and site photos are shown in **Figure 8** and the proposed project site plan is shown in **Figure 9**.

### *Site Access and Parking*

The property is accessed from Lewis Road by a private, 35-foot-wide driveway along the western boundary of the property. The site currently has 138 parking spaces, and five standard accessible parking spaces and one van accessible space.

Figure 8

Figure 9



### *Water*

There are two existing wells on the property. The first well serves as the primary well and has a capacity of 250 gallons per minute (GPM). The second well has a capacity of 70 GPM and serves as a domestic well and as a backup water source for irrigation. The site also includes three existing water storage tanks with a total capacity of 112,000 gallons. The site is located within the Corralitos-Pajaro Valley Groundwater Basin. All taps will have signs indicating potable and non-potable water.

Pursuant to MCC Chapter 21.67.050.B.8, water conservation measures would be incorporated in order to minimize the use of water where feasible. Top drip feed irrigation would be used for cultivation, which would keep runoff below 5 percent. The 5 percent runoff would be captured, re-filtered and sterilized, and then reintroduced into the irrigation water supply.

### *Wastewater*

Wastewater consists of domestic sewage produced at restroom facilities and process wastewater produced during project operation and maintenance activities, including but not limited to wash water. All domestic wastewater would be contained in an on-site septic system, and pumped and hauled out to an approved wastewater treatment facility by a registered liquid waste hauler. Process wastewater would be disposed of in compliance with the Cannabis General Order, as discussed in Section 10, Hydrology and Water Quality. Restroom improvements would be made within an existing building. Existing and proposed septic improvements at this project site, including leach fields and septic tanks, are shown on the site plan (please refer to Section 19, Utilities and Service Systems, for more detailed information).

### *Drainage*

No changes to existing drainage pattern are proposed. No drainage improvements are necessary or proposed at this time. The applicant would inspect and maintain the existing drainage culverts as necessary. No increase in impervious surface would result from the proposed project.

The site is located within Special Flood Hazard Area Zone AE according to FEMA (please refer to Section 10, Hydrology and Water Quality, for more detailed information).

### *Solid Waste*

All waste will be disposed of per local, California, and federal regulations. Waste Management is currently providing waste disposal and recycling services for non-cannabis waste. Recycling and regular waste are stored in receptacles on site until transported by Waste Management to a waste management facility.

Cannabis waste disposal procedures would comply with Division 30, Sections 40141 and 42649.8(d) of the PRC. In addition, pursuant to DCC regulations 16309(a)(2) and 17223, the applicant has prepared a cannabis waste management plan, which may include composting cannabis waste. All composted cannabis waste would be done in compliance with Title 14 of the CCR at Chapter 3.1, commencing with Section 17850. The County does not allow for burning of cannabis waste on the project site.

### *Lighting & Security*

As part of proposed project security measures, the project would include the installation of outdoor lighting as identified in the project's Security Plan, which is required by Business and Professions Code Section 26070 and MCC Chapter 7.90. New outdoor lighting would ensure the safety of persons and protect the premises from theft and other crimes. Outdoor lighting would be downward facing, shielded to direct light downwards to ensure that lighting does not spill over onto nearby properties, and would be consistent with local lighting ordinances and DCC regulations.

Minimal motion-sensing, downward facing (shielded) lighting would be used for security purposes. A new security fence is proposed along the perimeter of the property along with a new security gate to be located off Lewis Road. Locked gates would have a lock box or other acceptable means for immediate access by emergency equipment.

In addition to security lighting, cannabis cultivation requires various lighting treatments at different stages in the process. The growth stage requires a minimum of 12 hours of light. Greenhouses would be retrofitted with mechanical curtains to block light during periods with longer hours of daylight (i.e., summer). Conversely, greenhouses would be retrofitted with electrical LED lighting to provide supplemental light during period of limited natural light (i.e., winter). The existing greenhouses employ shielding and/or blackout tarps that prevent interior light from escaping between sunset and sunrise, as required per DCC regulation 16304(a)(7).

### *Energy*

Cultivation equipment, particularly lighting and climate control equipment required for mixed-light operations, requires a relatively large amount of energy (primarily electric) for operation. Energy use for mixed-light operations include LED lighting, dehumidification to remove water vapor and avoid mold formation, space heating or cooling during non-illuminated periods and drying processes, preheating of irrigation water, generation of CO<sub>2</sub> from fossil fuel combustion, and ventilation and air condition to remove waste heat (Source: 42). Lighting is the greatest contributor to energy use (Source: 42). However, the project is proposing mixed-light operations, which uses less energy than indoor grow facilities. Reliance on equipment can vary widely depending on plant spacing, layout, and the surrounding climate at a given facility. Generators would provide emergency backup power in the event of a power outage. Odor control measures such as ventilation systems, filters and and/or odor-neutralizers would be installed, as needed, for plant cultivation, post-harvest production, and processing.

### *Utilities*

The site is served by CCCE for electricity and PG&E for natural gas.

### *Landscaping*

No existing trees are proposed for removal. Trees would be maintained as necessary to improve access and visibility.

### *Fire Protection*

The facilities would be fully protected with automatic fire sprinkler systems, fire extinguishers, and alarm systems, as required under the fire and building codes. Access roads would be constructed to provide a minimum width of 20 feet with an unobstructed vertical clearance not less than 15 feet to allow for emergency fire vehicles and equipment.

### *Operations*

The applicant proposes commercial cannabis cultivation, nursery, manufacturing, and distribution, in accordance with MCC and DCC regulations. Mixed-light cannabis cultivation would occur in the existing greenhouses. Drying, curing, trimming, extraction, and distribution activities would occur in the existing agricultural support buildings on-site. The applicant intends to extract oil using a CO<sub>2</sub> and/or ethanol non-volatile process. Ethanol would be used in the winterization process. The applicant would distribute its own product to licensed cultivators, manufacturers, distributors, and retailers.

The hours of operation during which staff would be present would be 24 hours per day, 7 days a week. Deliveries would be accepted during regular business hours Monday through Friday, 6:00 am to 10:00 pm. The facility would be closed to the public; only scheduled, business-related deliveries or visitors would be permitted on-site.

The cultivation stage of cannabis operations requires minimal staffing. The applicant estimates 19 employees would be required at the proposed facility. Plants are watered by drip irrigation and light is controlled by timers and mechanical curtains during the growth stage. The processing stage typically requires additional seasonable staff to process the plants (i.e., cutting, trimming, and drying), approximately 10-20 additional staff. The dried product is packaged on-site and prepared for distribution. In addition, some plants may be cut into smaller plants and cloned for distribution to other facilities.

The facility would have approximately six visitors per week, and the frequency of deliveries, including mail, delivery of supplies, and vendors is approximately two to five vehicles deliveries per week. The types of delivery vehicles include cars, cargo vans, pickup trucks, small delivery trucks, and refrigerated semi-trailers, depending on the type and size of delivery. It is anticipated that most of the deliveries of products and supplies into and out of the facilities would be relatively small and that delivery vehicles would be no larger than a small truck. Loading spaces are identified on the site plans.

### **12/12 Genetics**

The 5-acre project site consists of one parcel and is currently and has historically been used for agricultural production. The property is currently used for nursery, cultivation, processing, extraction, and distribution of cannabis within existing structures. The parcel is zoned AC and located within the Coastal Zone.

The site contains 126,720 sf of existing structures: greenhouses (118,690 sf); a warehouse (3,000 sf); agricultural support buildings (approximately 3,500 sf); and a single-family residence (1,520

sf), which is not part of the proposed project. The existing non-residential structures are currently being used for commercial cannabis cultivation, nursery, processing, and distribution.

As stated above, the site is currently used for cannabis operations and improvements have been made to the existing structures. The site includes an existing well, water storage tanks for irrigation and domestic water, two gates (12 feet wide and 20 feet wide with Knox Boxes), and a septic system. Proposed improvements include 20-foot-wide and 14-foot-wide gates, water storage tank for fire protection, fire hydrant, waste enclosure area, and security cameras and lighting. The existing warehouse would be used for distribution, storage, office, manufacturing, and restrooms (restrooms are existing). Minimal improvements are proposed for the existing greenhouses. The applicant is proposing the following greenhouse improvements:

1. Replace the roof panels to increase light transmission;
2. Install a new micro-irrigation system (the current irrigation system is complete); and
3. Replace the ground cloth upon expansion of the operation (the current ground cloth replacement for the existing operation is complete).

The existing and proposed improvements are detailed below; an aerial view of the site and site photos are shown in **Figure 10** and the proposed project site plan is shown in **Figure 11**.

#### *Site Access and Parking*

The site is accessed via paved driveways at McGinnis Road and Johnson Road. There are 22 parking spaces proposed, including one accessible parking space.

#### *Water*

The project site is served by a permitted water system (McGinnis Road WS #2, ID #270-3692) comprised of one existing well and water storage tanks located on the property. Irrigation and domestic water are served by this water system. The site is located within the Corralitos-Pajaro Valley Groundwater Basin. The site contains one well and one, 20,000-gallon and two, 10,000-gallon water storage tanks (40,000 gallons total) for irrigation and domestic water. As stated above, proposed improvements include a water storage tank for fire protection. The applicant has a pending application with the Monterey County Environmental Health Bureau (EHB) for a new water system serving 15 to 24 individuals with up to four connections. The proposed water system will include either treatment of the existing well water or the drilling of a new replacement well (including destruction of the existing well) in order to achieve water quality standards. If required, the proposed replacement well would be set back 10 feet from the property line, 150 feet from the existing well, 100 feet from the leach line, and 100 feet from the septic tank. The installation of the treatment system or the replacement well is anticipated to take place in 2023. All taps will have signs indicating potable and non-potable water.

Figure 10

Figure 11

Pursuant to MCC Chapter 21.67.050.B.8, water conservation measures would be incorporated in order to minimize the use of water where feasible. Micro-irrigation and a pulse watering schedule would reduce water use by 30 percent compared to traditional water use methods.

#### *Wastewater*

Wastewater consists of domestic sewage produced at restroom facilities and process wastewater produced during project operation and maintenance activities, including but not limited to wash water. All domestic wastewater would be contained in an on-site septic system, and pumped and hauled out to an approved wastewater treatment facility by a registered liquid waste hauler. Process wastewater would be disposed of in compliance with the Cannabis General Order, as discussed in Section 10, Hydrology and Water Quality. The project plans include On-Site Wastewater Treatment System (OWTS) plans indicating the location, design layout, and size specifications based on project needs and wastewater generation estimates. Existing and proposed septic improvements include leach fields and septic tanks as shown on **Figure 11** (Source: 39). The site currently has accessible restrooms in the warehouse and a septic system. A performance evaluation of the OWTS indicated that the existing septic system has the capacity to serve the proposed project.

#### *Drainage*

No changes to existing drainage pattern are proposed. No drainage improvements are necessary or proposed at this time. The applicant would inspect and maintain the existing drainage culverts as necessary. No increase in impervious surface would result from the proposed project.

#### *Solid Waste*

All waste will be disposed of per local, California, and federal regulations. Waste Management is currently providing waste disposal and recycling services for non-cannabis waste. Recycling and regular waste are stored in receptacles on site until transported by Waste Management to a waste management facility.

Cannabis waste disposal procedures would comply with Division 30, Sections 40141 and 42649.8(d) of the PRC. In addition, pursuant to DCC regulations 16309(a)(2) and 17223, the applicant has prepared a cannabis waste management plan, which may include composting cannabis waste. All composted cannabis waste would be done in compliance with Title 14 of the CCR at Chapter 3.1, commencing with Section 17850. The County does not allow for burning of cannabis waste on the project site.

#### *Lighting & Security*

As part of proposed project security measures, the project would include the installation of outdoor lighting as identified in the project's Security Plan, which is required by Business and Professions Code Section 26070 and MCC Chapter 7.90. New outdoor lighting would ensure the safety of persons and protect the premises from theft and other crimes. Outdoor lighting would be downward facing, shielded to direct light downwards to ensure that lighting does not spill over onto nearby properties, and would be consistent with local lighting ordinances and DCC regulations.

Minimal motion-sensing, downward facing (shielded) lighting would be used for security purposes. The property has an existing 5-foot-high security fence on the property line. A new 6-foot-high fence is proposed as well as 20-foot-wide and 14-foot-wide gates.

In addition to security lighting, cannabis cultivation requires various lighting treatments at different stages in the process. The growth stage requires a minimum of 12 hours of light. Greenhouses would be retrofitted with mechanical curtains to block light during periods with longer hours of daylight (i.e., summer). Conversely, greenhouses would be retrofitted with electrical LED lighting to provide supplemental light during period of limited natural light (i.e., winter). The existing greenhouses employ shielding and/or blackout tarps that prevent interior light from escaping between sunset and sunrise, as required per DCC regulation 16304(a)(7).

### *Energy*

Cultivation equipment, particularly lighting and climate control equipment required for mixed-light operations, requires a relatively large amount of energy (primarily electric) for operation. Energy use for mixed-light operations include LED lighting, dehumidification to remove water vapor and avoid mold formation, space heating or cooling during non-illuminated periods and drying processes, preheating of irrigation water, generation of CO<sub>2</sub> from fossil fuel combustion, and ventilation and air condition to remove waste heat (Source: 42). Lighting is the greatest contributor to energy use (Source: 42). However, the project is proposing mixed-light operations, which uses less energy than indoor grow facilities. Reliance on equipment can vary widely depending on plant spacing, layout, and the surrounding climate at a given facility. Generators would provide emergency backup power in the event of a power outage. Odor control measures such as ventilation systems, filters and and/or odor-neutralizers would be installed, as needed, for plant cultivation, post-harvest production, and processing.

12/12 Genetics has already replaced old, inefficient heaters with new, energy-efficient heaters, and 200-watt incandescent lights with 35-watt LED lighting. Additionally, state of the art, energy-efficient Schaefer fans have been installed for air movement.

### *Utilities*

The site is served by CCCE for electricity and PG&E for natural gas.

### *Landscaping*

Removal of existing trees are not proposed. Trees would be maintained as necessary to improve access and visibility.

### *Fire Protection*

The facilities would be fully protected with automatic fire sprinkler systems, fire extinguishers, and alarm systems, as required under the fire and building codes. Access roads would be constructed to provide a minimum width of 20 feet with an unobstructed vertical clearance not less than 15 feet to allow for emergency fire vehicles and equipment.



### *Operations*

The applicant proposes commercial cannabis cultivation, nursery, manufacturing, and distribution, in accordance with MCC and DCC regulations. Mixed-light cannabis cultivation would occur in the existing greenhouses. Drying, curing, trimming, extraction, and distribution activities would occur in the existing agricultural support buildings on-site. The applicant intends to extract oil using a CO<sub>2</sub> and/or ethanol non-volatile process. Ethanol would be used in the winterization process. The applicant would distribute its own product to licensed cultivators, manufacturers, distributors, and retailers.

The proposed hours of operation during which staff would be present would be between 7:00 am and 9:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Deliveries would be accepted during regular business hours Monday through Friday, 6:00 am to 10:00 pm. The facility would be closed to the public; only scheduled, business-related deliveries or visitors would be permitted on-site.

The cultivation stage of cannabis operations requires minimal staffing. The applicant currently has two employees and estimates eight employees would be required at the proposed facility. Plants are watered by drip irrigation and light is controlled by timers and mechanical curtains during the growth stage. The processing stage typically requires additional seasonable staff to process the plants (i.e., cutting, trimming, and drying); the applicant estimates 18 employees during peak operations. During peak operations, employees would work in shifts with 16 employees during the regular day shift (7:00 am to 4:00 pm), and two employees during the afternoon shift (12:00 pm to 8:00 pm). The dried product is packaged on-site and prepared for distribution. In addition, some plants may be cut into smaller plants and cloned for distribution to other facilities.

The facility would have approximately six visitors per week, and the frequency of deliveries, including mail, delivery of supplies, and vendors is approximately three to five vehicles deliveries per week. The types of delivery vehicles include vans and small delivery trucks (12 to 20 feet), depending on the type and size of delivery. It is anticipated that most of the deliveries of products and supplies into and out of the facilities would be relatively small and that delivery vehicles would be no larger than a small truck. Loading spaces are identified on the site plans.

## **B. SURROUNDING LAND USES AND ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING**

The proposed projects are located at five separate locations within the communities of Royal Oaks and Aromas in unincorporated northern Monterey County (**Figure 1**). The proposed projects would include cannabis cultivation within a total of approximately 1,156,854 sf of greenhouses and other ancillary cultivation activities within a total of approximately 87,290 sf of support buildings (**Table 2**). The proposed projects are located within agricultural areas, generally east of State Highway 1, south of Highway 129, and to the west and north of Highway 156/Highway 101 (**Figure 1**). The project sites are comprised of one or more parcels at separate locations. The addresses, Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs), Monterey County General Plan Land Use Designations, and Zoning for each site are detailed above in **Table 1**.

The Coasta Bella, Gold Coast Gardens, and Coastal Farms project sites are located in an area of Monterey County that is part of the Pajaro River Valley, which contains a mix of small agricultural parcels and rural residential properties. The Coasta Bella and Gold Coast Gardens sites are located adjacent to the Pajaro River levee. Numerous greenhouse operations previously used for the cut flower industry exist in the area creating an agricultural setting with related support facilities and single-family residential units. The sites are located in established farmland zoning areas and bordered by active agriculture land uses of similar nature and intensity. The surrounding general plan land uses designations and zoning are the same as the project sites.

The 214 Lewis Road and 12/12 Genetics project sites are also located in established farmland zoning areas and surrounded by existing agricultural uses of similar nature and intensity. The surrounding general plan land use designations and zoning are the same as the project sites.

All of the project sites are largely developed with existing greenhouses and various agricultural support structures, including storage buildings, water tanks, emergency generators, and parking areas. The project sites also contain or are immediately adjacent to single-family residences, which are not proposed as part of the projects. All of the project sites are relatively flat and primarily unvegetated with some areas of ruderal vegetation and horticultural, ornamental trees.

With the exception of 214 Lewis Road, the project sites are currently operational with licensed cannabis cultivation, manufacturing, processing, and distribution. Currently, the 214 Lewis Road site is operational for herbs, floral, and vegetable production.

Currently, there are five cannabis cultivation permits already approved within North Monterey County:

- PLN170127 – McCahon (LadyBug Farms), Royal Oaks
- PLN170173 – Tottino (Biopharmaceuticals), Castroville
- PLN170215 – Brown Bulb Ranch, Moss Landing
- PLN170301 – Bell & Grimes (Grupo Flor), Castroville
- PLN180466 – T&B Sprague (Compliance Park), Castroville

Currently, there are five cannabis cultivation permit applications in progress within North Monterey County, which are not approved and not included in this IS:

- PLN160401 – Moss Landing Business Park (a separate IS is being prepared)
- PLN170284 – Luiz (Coasta Bella), Royal Oaks
- PLN170285 – Luiz (Coasta Bella), Royal Oaks
- PLN170633 – Gear (65 Bluff Rd LLC), Moss Landing
- PLN190016 – Alvarez Bros, Pajaro (Indoor grow)

### **C. General Plan Land Use Designation**

All of the proposed projects are located within the in-land areas of the County and are designated as Farmlands (F), except for the 1212 Genetics site, which is located in the Coastal Zone and is designated Agricultural Conservation (AC/CZ) (**Table 1**). Farmlands are typically 40-160 acres minimum and allow a range of uses to conserve and enhance the use of important farmlands in the County while also providing opportunity to establish necessary support and ancillary facilities for those agricultural uses. The extent of use of land for this land use designation for the inland area is limited to building coverage of 5 percent of the subject property, except for commercial greenhouse operations, which are permitted coverage of 50 percent. Building coverage is limited to 3 percent of the subject property within the Coastal Zone; the zoning code does not specify any provisions for building coverage for greenhouses. Land adjacent to the sites are primarily designated Farmlands and Agricultural Conservation.

### **D. Zoning**

All of the inland sites are zoned Farmlands (F/40) and the Coastal Zone site (12/12 Genetics) is zoned Agricultural Conservation (AC/CZ), which allows soil dependent agricultural uses, including crop and tree farming, dry land farming, livestock farming, greenhouses, and vineyards. These zoning designations allow specified cannabis uses with approval of an Administrative Permit (AP) or CDP and Commercial Cannabis Permit (CCBP) by the County.

Commercial cannabis cultivation is only allowed within greenhouses, warehouses, and industrial buildings established prior to January 1, 2016, and located only and industrial buildings within the following inland zoning districts: Light Industrial, Heavy Industrial, Agricultural Industrial, and Farmland, and the following coastal zoning districts: Light Industrial, Heavy Industrial, Agricultural Industrial, Agricultural Conservation, and Coastal Agricultural Preserve. In May of 2021, Monterey County adopted an ordinance that allows new or expanded greenhouse facilities on properties that already contain a greenhouse legally established prior to January 1, 2016. All new greenhouses are subject to the underlying zoning and permitting regulations including coverage limitations.

### **E. Analysis Baseline**

CEQA Guidelines Section 15125(a) defines the environmental setting of a project as being: “the physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of the project, as they exist at the time of the notice of preparation is published, or if no notice of preparation is published, at the time environmental analysis is commenced, from both a local and regional perspective.”

The Guidelines state that the “environmental setting will *normally* constitute the baseline physical conditions by which a lead agency determines whether an impact is significant” (emphasis added). In certain instances, the lead agency has the discretion to use a baseline other than existing conditions at the time environmental analysis is commenced, as long as this decision is supported by substantial evidence.

For this Initial Study, the baseline for most issues is the existing conditions, as described under Setting above. This includes existing greenhouses that were previously used for various agricultural production, including cut flowers, herbs, and crops. Four of the five project sites contain greenhouses currently cultivating cannabis. These sites have been cultivating cannabis since 2015 when the ~~MAUCRSA~~ Medical Cannabis Regulation and Safety Act (MCRSA) was passed in California. On November 8, 2016, California voters passed Proposition 64 (the Adult Use of Marijuana Act [AUMA]), legalizing the use and possession of nonmedicinal cannabis products within California by adults aged 21 years and older. In June 2017, California Legislature passed a budget trailer bill, Senate Bill 94, that repealed MAUCRSA and integrated medicinal cannabis licensing with adult-use cannabis licensing under AUMA to create MAUCRSA. Only one site, 214 Lewis Road, is not cultivating cannabis but is currently operating as cut flower, herb, and vegetable production.

For five issue areas – air quality, energy, greenhouse gas emissions, transportation, and water supply – the baseline for analysis accounts for the prior use of the greenhouses for various agricultural production, excluding cannabis; primarily cut flowers. Given the historic use of the greenhouse project sites for agricultural production, and the intent of the applicants to continue to cultivate commercial cannabis within greenhouses that are currently cultivating cannabis, and to convert greenhouses that were previously utilized for agricultural production to commercial cannabis cultivation, it has been determined that the most consistent baseline for evaluating air quality impacts, greenhouse gas emissions, energy demand, vehicle trips, and water demand associated with all greenhouse project sites is the prior agricultural use.

**F. Other Public Agencies whose Approval may be Required**

Permit Type/Action	Agency
Cannabis Cultivation License <del>State Business License</del> Cannabis Manufacturing License Cannabis Distribution Permit <del>On-Site Wastewater Treatment Permit</del>	Department of Cannabis Control (DCC)
Evidence of Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement or Verification Not Required	California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)
National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction General Permit and coverage under the Cannabis Cultivation General Order	State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB)
Adoption of the IS/ND	County of Monterey
Approval of Administrative Permit or Coastal Development Permit	County of Monterey
Local Cannabis permit and business license	County of Monterey
Water system permit	County Bureau of Environmental Health
Authority to Construct Permit to Operate	Monterey Bay Air Resources District (MBARD)

The four inland ~~properties~~ project sites are governed by policies and regulations contained in the 2010 Monterey County General Plan (General Plan), North County Area Plan (NCAP), and Monterey County Inland Zoning Ordinance (Title 21).

The 12/12 Genetics site is located in the Coastal Zone and is governed by the policies and regulations contained in the North County Land Use Plan (NC LUP), North County Coastal Implementation Plan, and Monterey County Coastal Zoning Ordinance (Title 20).

Subsequent to obtaining the above discretionary approvals, the project would require ministerial approval from the Environmental Health Bureau, Public Works and Facilities, Environmental Services, and North County Fire Protection District through the County's building permit process. In addition, any conditions of approval required by the reviewing agencies would require compliance prior to issuance and/or final of ministerial permits. Environmental Services has conditioned the project to obtain a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). Therefore, approval by the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (CCRWQCB) would also be required. The 12/12 Genetics site is also within the appeal jurisdiction of the California Coastal Commission (CCC).

### **III. PROJECT CONSISTENCY WITH OTHER APPLICABLE LOCAL AND STATE PLANS AND MANDATED LAWS**

Use the list below to indicate plans applicable to the project and verify their consistency or non-consistency with project implementation.

General Plan/Area Plan	■	Air Quality Mgmt. Plan	■
Specific Plan	□	Airport Land Use Plans	□
Water Quality Control Plan	■	Local Coastal Program-LUP	■

#### MONTEREY COUNTY 2010 GENERAL PLAN/ NORTH COUNTY AREA PLAN

The project sites are subject to the General Plan, which provides regulatory framework, through goals and policies, for physical development. Agriculture is the largest industry in the County and significantly contributes to the local economy. As such, the County elected to include an Agricultural Element within the General Plan to establish policies directed at enhancing and supporting long-term productivity and commercial viability of the County’s agricultural industry.

The ~~four~~<sup>six</sup> inland proposed projects were reviewed for consistency with the General Plan and NCAP. The proposed commercial cannabis uses are consistent with the Farmlands land use designation. Furthermore, the proposed projects have also been reviewed for consistency with the development standards listed in MCC Section 21.24, Title 21, Zoning Ordinance, Heavy Commercial Zoning Districts and Urban Reserve Zoning District.

The inland area projects are consistent with the land use categories, policies, and standards of the plans and ordinances, as further discussed in Section 11, Land Use and Planning. **CONSISTENT.**

#### NORTH COUNTY LAND USE PLAN AND COASTAL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The proposed 12/12 Genetics project was reviewed for consistency with the North County Land Use Plan (NC LUP) and Coastal Implementation Plan, Parts 1 (Title 20) and 2 (Chapter 20.144), which provides goals and policies for development in the unincorporated coastal area of North Monterey County. These regulations comprise the North County Local Coastal Program that applies to this project. Chapter 7 of the NC LUP outlines three basic tests for demonstrating a project’s conformance with the plan: 1) the project must conform to the type and intensity of uses permitted within the specific geographical area concerned; 2) the project must conform to the policies in Chapters 2 through 6 of the NC LUP<sup>4</sup>; and 3) the project must fully meet any specific zoning provisions adopted to implement the plan.

As described in Section II. Description of the Proposed Projects, of this Initial Study, the proposed project consists of a cannabis facility on a property with an Agricultural land use designation and

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<sup>4</sup> If the project is not consistent with the policies contained in Chapters 2 through 6, the project shall not be approved unless it is modified to be consistent.

zoned AC/CZ. As discussed in Sections IV and V of this Initial Study, the project, as proposed and conditioned, is consistent with Chapters 2 through 6 of the NC LUP. Chapter 2 acknowledges the existing agricultural use at the site. Policies in this chapter state that farmland designated for AC land use shall be preserved for agricultural use to the fullest extent possible as consistent with the protection of environmentally sensitive habitats and the concentration of development. The proposed 12/12 Genetics project would provide for continued agricultural use within an existing agricultural area. **CONSISTENT.**

#### AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP, Source: 44) for the Monterey Bay Region addresses the attainment and maintenance of state and federal ambient air quality standards within the North Central Coast Air Basin (NCCAB), including the Aromas and Royal Oaks communities. Consistency with the AQMP is an indication that the project avoids contributing to a cumulative adverse impact on air quality; not an indication of project specific impacts which are evaluated according to the Monterey Bay Air Resources District's (MBARD) adopted thresholds of significance. Indirect emissions associated with agricultural projects are found consistent with the AQMP if the estimated cumulative population of the relevant forecast listed in the AQMP is not exceeded as a result of the project.

The proposed projects are intended to provide agricultural use. It is anticipated that 6-19 employees would be required at each of the project sites and an estimated 10-20 additional seasonal staff during the processing stage at each site. As the proposed cannabis operations were previously used for other agricultural activities, the employment provided by the proposed projects would be mostly transferred employment opportunities from existing uses, and the overall increase or decrease in employment in the County would be minor. Therefore, there would be no substantial increase in population in the area as a result of the proposed projects. The proposed projects do not include residential development and, therefore, would not result in a population increase not already accounted for in the AQMP. Direct emissions associated with agricultural population-serving projects are found consistent with the AQMP. The proposed projects' construction emissions that would temporarily emit precursors of ozone are accommodated in the emission inventories of state- and federally-required air plans. The proposed projects would not cause an increase of stationary emissions than what currently exists. **CONSISTENT.**

The proposed project was reviewed for consistency with the 2012-MBARD's CEQA Air Quality Guidelines for the Monterey Bay Region. Section 3, Air Quality, discusses whether this particular project conflicts or obstructs implementation of air quality plans, violates any standard or contributes to air quality violations, results in cumulative non-attainment of ambient air quality standards, exposes sensitive receptors to pollutant concentrations or creates objectionable odors affecting many people. The proposed projects comply with the requirements of this plan. **CONSISTENT.**

## WATER QUALITY CONTROL PLAN

The subject properties lie within Region 3 of the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (CCRWQCB) which regulates sources of water quality related issues resulting in actual or potential impairment or degradation of beneficial uses, or the overall degradation of water quality.

Operation of the proposed projects would not generate pollutant runoff in amounts that would cause degradation of water quality. In accordance with Chapter 16.12 of the County Code, the proposed projects will be conditioned by the HCD-Environmental Services requiring the applicants to submit drainage and erosion control plans. The CCRWQCB has designated the Director of Health as the administrator of the individual sewage disposal regulations, conditional upon County authorities enforcing the Regional Water Quality Control Plan, Central Coast Basin (Basin Plan). These regulations are codified in Chapter 15.20 of the Monterey County Code. The Environmental Health Bureau has reviewed the proposed projects and found adequate public sewer service and water system that meets the required standards and location consistent with these regulations. For additional discussion on hydrology and water quality, please refer to Section 10 of this Initial Study. **CONSISTENT.**

The proposed projects are consistent with the 2010 General Plan and AMBAG'S 2014 regional population and employment forecast. The CCRWQCB incorporates these documents in its preparation of regional water quality plans; therefore, the proposed projects are consistent with the Regional Water Quality Control Plan. Section 10, Hydrology and Water Quality, discusses whether the proposed projects violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements, substantially depletes groundwater supplies or interferes substantially with groundwater recharge, substantially alters the existing drainage pattern of the sites or area, or creates or contributes runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage. **CONSISTENT.**



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#### ***IV. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED AND DETERMINATION***

##### **A. FACTORS**

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by the projects, as discussed within the checklist on the following pages.

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture and Forest Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air Quality                        |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Energy                             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Geology/Soils             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Greenhouses Gas Emissions        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hazards & Hazardous Materials      |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hydrology/Water Quality   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Land Use/Planning                | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources                             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Noise                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Population/Housing                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation                           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation/Traffic           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tribal Cultural Resources          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Utilities/Service Systems | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wildfire                         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance |

Some proposed applications that are not exempt from CEQA review may have little or no potential for adverse environmental impact related to most of the topics in the Environmental Checklist; and/or potential impacts may involve only a few limited subject areas. These types of projects are generally minor in scope, located in a non-sensitive environment, and are easily identifiable without public controversy. For the environmental issue areas where there is no potential for significant environmental impact (and not checked above), the following finding can be made using the project description, environmental setting, or other information as supporting evidence.

- Check here if this finding is not applicable

**FINDING:** For the above referenced topics that are not checked off, there is no potential for significant environmental impact to occur from construction, operation or maintenance of the proposed project and no further discussion in the Environmental Checklist is necessary.

**EVIDENCE:** Based upon the planner’s project analysis, many of the above topics on the checklist do not apply. Less than significant impacts or potentially significant impacts are identified for Aesthetics, Agricultural and Forestry Resources, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Energy, Geology/Soils, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazards/Hazardous Materials, Hydrology/Water Quality, Land Use/Planning, Noise, Transportation, Tribal Cultural Resources, Utilities/Service Systems, and Wildfire. The project would have no quantifiable adverse environmental effect on the categories not checked above, as follows:

Mineral Resources: No mineral resources have been identified or would be affected by the proposed projects. The project sites are not located in an area containing mineral resources. The proposed projects would not result in a change in land use or otherwise result in the potential loss of availability of a mineral resource. *No Impact* (Source: 7).

Population and Housing: The proposed projects would allow for cannabis production within existing and proposed agricultural greenhouses. The operations would potentially increase the number of on-site employees but would not result in direct population growth. As the proposed cannabis operations were previously used for other agricultural activities, the employment provided by the proposed projects would be mostly transferred employment opportunities from prior or existing uses, and the increase or decrease in overall employment in the County would be minor. The proposed projects would employ 6-19 full time employees at each site, with an estimated 10-20 additional seasonal staff at each site during the processing stage. The vast majority of current employees live locally, which can be reasonably assumed to continue to be true under the proposed projects. The project sites would maintain agricultural uses under existing zoning and would not directly induce unplanned population growth. The cannabis operations would occur at existing developed sites and would not displace people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Public Services: The project sites are currently serviced by the North County Fire Protection District. Cannabis businesses are required to pay a tax per square foot that goes directly to funding the fire district, per a measure passed in June 2018. The nearest station to the project sites is located at 313 Elkhorn Road, Royal Oaks, approximately 1.5 to 5.5 miles from the project sites. The Monterey County Sheriff’s Office provides police services to the unincorporated portions of the County, including the project sites. The office is located at 1414 Natividad Road in Salinas, approximately 15 miles from the project sites.

The proposed projects would not involve the construction of new habitable structures, and as discussed above, would require an estimate 6-18 employees and 10-20 seasonal staff per site. As a result, the proposed projects would not result in a substantial population increase that would require additional facilities. The proposed projects would not result in significant additional demand for police

protection services. The proposed project would not result in the need for new or physically altered facilities. Because the proposed projects would not generate a population increase, it would not result in the need for the construction of new schools, parks, or other public facilities. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Recreation: The proposed projects would not result in a population increase, and, therefore, would not result in the increased use of existing recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur. The proposed projects do not involve the construction or expansion of existing recreational facilities. Therefore, there would be no impact.

**B. DETERMINATION**

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
- I find that the proposed project MAY have a “potentially significant impact” or “potentially significant unless mitigated” impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

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Name

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Date

## ***V. EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS***

- 1) A brief explanation is required for all answers except “No Impact” answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A “No Impact” answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A “No Impact” answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on project-specific screening analysis).
- 2) All answers must take into account the whole action involved, including offsite as well as onsite, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.
- 3) Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
- 4) "Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from Section XVII, "Earlier Analyses," may be cross-referenced).
- 5) Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c) (3) (D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
  - a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
  - b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
  - c) Mitigation Measures. For effects that are "Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.
- 6) Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist, references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a

previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.

- 7) Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.
- 8) The explanation of each issue should identify:
  - a) The significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
  - b) The mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance.

## VI. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

1. AESTHETICS		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>					
a)	Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b)	Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c)	In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d)	Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### DISCUSSION:

The four inland project sites are primarily zoned Farmlands with a minimum building site of 40 acres (or “F/40”). However, portions of the Coasta Bella and Gold Coast Gardens sites are zoned Resource Conservation with a minimum building site of 40 acres and Open Space, and a portion of Coastal Farms site is zoned Permanent Grazing with a minimum building site of 40 acres with Visual Sensitivity and Open Space.

The County of Monterey does not identify any specific vistas within this area of the County (Source: 33). Goal OS-1 of the General Plan protects scenic resources by retaining the character and natural beauty of Monterey County by preserving, conserving, and maintaining unique physical features, natural resources, and agricultural operations (Source: 27). As such, there are scenic highways and corridors identified within each area plan with implementing policies to support this goal. The four inland sites are subject to the NCAP, which identifies portions of Highway 156 as a scenic highway and San Miguel Canyon Road, Crazy Horse Canyon Road, and San Juan Grade Road as proposed scenic routes (Source: 25). The four inland project sites are not located near or visible from these roads. With the exception of the Coastal Farms site, none of the inland sites are located within a visually sensitive area designated by the NCAP, as shown on Figure 15 of the NCAP (Source: 25).



### COASTA BELLA

Coasta Bella would involve the use of the existing greenhouses and support structures, and the construction of three new metal buildings at the site (including one new metal building on the Gold Coast Gardens parcel). The new structures would not be located within the Resource Conservation or Open Space portions of the project site.

### GOLD COAST GARDENS

The Gold Coast Gardens and Coastal Farms projects would involve the use of the existing greenhouses and support structures, and would not result in the construction of any new structures that would obstruct or otherwise impact a scenic vista.

### 214 LEWIS ROAD

The 214 Lewis Road site is not located within visually sensitive area and is not visible from any designated scenic highway corridors.

### COASTAL FARMS

The existing greenhouses and agricultural support buildings at the Coastal Farms site abut a hillside with coast live oak savanna, which is zoned Permanent Grazing – Visual Sensitivity. The Coastal Farms project would involve the use of the existing greenhouses and support structures, and would not result in the construction of any new structures that would obstruct or otherwise impact a scenic vista.

### 12/12 GENETICS

The 12/12 Genetics site is zoned AC/CZ (Agricultural Conservation within Coastal Zone). However, the project site is not located within visually sensitive area and is not visible from any designated scenic highway corridors.

### **CONCLUSIONS:**

#### **1(a) and (b). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

All of the project sites are currently developed with existing greenhouses and agricultural support structures. None of the proposed projects require tree removal. With the exception of Coastal Farms, the project sites are not located in areas designated by Monterey County as having any scenic vistas and are not located near or visible from any designated scenic highways or routes (Source: 25, 27, 33).

The Coastal Farms site is located within a visually sensitive area as designated by the NCAP. However, Coastal Farms is not proposing any new structures or activities that would impact or disrupt scenic views of the area.

NC LUP Section 2.2.2 requires protection of views to and along the ocean shoreline from Highway 1, and Key Policy 2.2.1 prohibits development in beach, dune, estuary, and wetland areas. The 12/12 Genetics site is located east of Highway 1, and would not disrupt view of the Pacific Ocean, dunes, or beaches.

Furthermore, agricultural activities are exempt from the viewshed policies of the General Plan, except in specific situations, which do not apply to the proposed projects.

For the reasons mentioned, the proposed projects would not have an adverse effect on scenic vistas or scenic resources, including trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a designated state highway. Impacts would be less than significant.

**1(c). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

All of the project sites are non-urbanized; however, the project sites are developed with existing greenhouses, agricultural support structures, parking areas, and driveways. Views in the project area consist of primarily agricultural farmland on the valley floor and rolling hillsides to the south and north.

The proposed projects would utilize the existing greenhouses and support buildings for cannabis operations. The conversion of existing facilities would minimally alter the existing character of the area. Additionally, the proposed reuse of old greenhouses would continue to revitalize the area, utilizing underused and blighted infrastructure. The proposed projects would maintain the existing aesthetic of the greenhouse structures with retrofitting enhancements such as shades. For security purposes, all of the project sites would be fenced, as described in Section II.A, Project Description. A 6-foot-high chain link security fence with razor wire or barb wire top currently or would enclose each property. These improvements would incrementally alter the existing visual character of public views of the site and its surroundings. At all project sites, in accordance with MCC 21.67.050, cannabis plants will not be visible from off-site and no visual markers indicating that cannabis is cultivated on the site will be visible from off-site. Therefore, the conversion of existing greenhouses and agricultural support facilities would result in less-than-significant impacts to the visual character and quality of the area.

Coasta Bella, in addition to using the existing greenhouses and support buildings, is proposing a new 16,128-sf greenhouse, a 25,000-sf distribution, manufacturing, and processing building, and a 4,500-sf processing building in undeveloped portions of the site.<sup>5</sup> As such, the proposed Coasta Bella project could potentially degrade the existing visual character and quality of the views surrounding the site by placing structures on undeveloped portions of the site. The new buildings would be metal and of similar size and scale as the existing greenhouses and buildings in the surrounding area. The construction of the new buildings would not require significant grading or vegetation removal. The Coasta Bella project would be compatible with the adjacent uses on- and off-site and surrounding visual character (i.e., agricultural and rural residential uses). Therefore,

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<sup>5</sup> The proposed processing facility would be located on the Gold Coast Gardens parcel.

the construction of the Coasta Bella project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views. Impacts would be less than significant.

**1(d). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

The proposed projects would introduce some new sources of light and glare, including exterior lighting (e.g., security lighting, building lighting, parking lot lights, and headlights from vehicles traveling to and from the sites), as well as the use of grow lights inside the greenhouses. Pursuant to MCC, security lighting is proposed at each of the sites and would be placed along the perimeter and entrances to each of the sites. Shielded lighting would be in compliance with Monterey County 2010 General Plan policy LU-1.13, which states that “All exterior lighting shall be unobtrusive and constructed or located so that only the intended area is illuminated, long range visibility is reduced of the lighting source, and off-site glare is fully controlled.” The objective of the exterior lighting systems would be to illuminate dark areas within the project sites. The lighting systems would only be triggered by motion detectors, which would limit the amount of time when such systems are activated. The lighting would be downward facing (shielded) and would not direct light into the sky in order to minimize light pollution.

The growing stage of the cannabis plant requires 12 hours of light, and, therefore, the existing and proposed greenhouses would be retrofitted with LED lighting to provide supplemental light during the portion of the year when there is limited natural light. This light has the potential to escape through the greenhouses’ siding such that it could be visible from neighboring properties, which could impact nighttime views. However, the existing greenhouses employ, and proposed greenhouses will employ, shielding and/or blackout tarps that prevent interior light from escaping between sunset and sunrise, as required per DCC regulation 16304(a)(7), which would limit the adverse impact.

The County of Monterey Design Guidelines for Exterior Lighting requires exterior lighting to be unobtrusive, reduce off-site glare, and only light an intended area. The guidelines establish criteria for the location and direction of fixtures, number of fixtures, and design of fixtures. The light levels would not exceed the minimum standards for safety and would be required to meet the County’s Exterior Lighting Guidelines. DCC regulation 16304(a)(6) requires all outdoor lighting used for safety and security purposes shall be shielded and downward facing. These existing regulations would limit adverse impacts from exterior lighting.

The five project sites are interspersed within the communities of Royal Oaks and Aromas, with only two sites located adjacent to each other (Coasta Bella and Gold Coast Gardens), and would not result in a concentration of new lighting in one location.

Conformance with the County of Monterey Design Guidelines for Exterior Lighting, DCC regulations, and MCC would reduce potential light and glare impacts to a less-than-significant level. Impacts would be less than significant.

**2. AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES**

In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state’s inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board.

<b>Would the project:</b>		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a)	Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b)	Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c)	Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d)	Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest uses?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e)	Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**DISCUSSION:**

All proposed project sites are in areas designated for agricultural use and are not part of a Williamson Act Contract. According to the California Department of Conservation Important Farmland Map, the Coasta Bella, Gold Coast Gardens, 214 Lewis, and 12/12 Genetics sites are designated as “Unique Farmland” (Source: 6). Unique Farmland consists of lesser quality soils used for the production of California’s leading agricultural crops. Coastal Farms is designated as “Other Land.” Other Land is land not included in any other mapping category, and common examples include low density rural developments, areas not suitable for livestock grazing, strip mines, and borrow pits. The project sites are not under the William Act contract (Source: 28).

Each proposed project site is currently developed, containing existing greenhouses and supporting agricultural buildings. The sites are not designated as forest land, or in an area for timberland production (Source: 6).

**CONCLUSIONS:**

**2(a). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

According to the California Department of Conservation Important Farmland Map, the Coasta Bella, Gold Coast Gardens, 214 Lewis, and 12/12 Genetics sites are designated as “Unique Farmland” (Source: 6). Coastal Farms is designated as “Other Land.” The proposed projects would convert existing greenhouses and construct new greenhouses and structures for commercial cannabis use. The MAUCRSA designates cannabis cultivation as an agricultural use for the purposes of the Act. In addition, commercial cannabis operations would only be permitted within structures that were legally established prior to January 1, 2016 (or within new or expanded greenhouses constructed after January 1, 2016, for inland areas) to avoid and reduce impacts related to the potential for construction of new structures within the farmland zones. Therefore, the proposed projects would no convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural use. Impacts would be less than significant.

**2(b-e). Conclusion: No Impact.**

The proposed projects do not conflict with applicable zoning regulations for their respective zoning districts or any Williamson Act contract. The proposed projects are not located within designated forestland or timberland; therefore, the projects would not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. Additionally, there would be no conflict of existing zoning of forest land, timberland, or timberland production. As a result, the proposed projects would not impact any of these resources.

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**3. AIR QUALITY**

Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations.

<b>Would the project:</b>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 3. AIR QUALITY

Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations.

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### DISCUSSION:

The federal Clean Air Act and the California Clean Air Act mandate the control and reduction of certain air pollutants. Under these Acts, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) and the California Air Resources Board (CARB) have established ambient air quality standards for specific “criteria” pollutants. These pollutants are carbon monoxide (CO), ozone (O<sub>3</sub>), sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>), particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter (PM<sub>10</sub>), lead, and particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>).

The CARB coordinates and oversees both state and federal air quality control programs in California. The CARB has established 14 air basins statewide and the subject properties are located in the NCCAB, which is comprised of Santa Cruz, San Benito, and Monterey Counties, and is regulated by the Monterey Bay Air Resources District (MBARD, formally known as Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District). The CARB uses ambient data from each air monitoring site in the NCCAB to calculate Expected Peak Day Concentration over a consecutive three-year period. MBARD is required to monitor air pollutant levels to ensure that state and federal air quality standards are not and, if they are not met, to develop strategies to meet the standards. MBARD is responsible for enforcing these standards and regulating stationary sources through the 2012-2015 Air Quality Management Plan for the Monterey Bay Region (AQMP) (Source: 44).

The U.S. EPA administers the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) under the federal Clean Air Act. The U.S. EPA sets the NAAQS and determines if areas meet those standards. Violations of ambient air quality standards are based on air pollutant monitoring data and evaluated for each air pollutant. Areas that do not violate ambient air quality standards are considered to have attained the standard. Depending on whether the standards are met or exceed, the NCCAB is classified as being in “attainment” or “nonattainment.” The NCCAB is in attainment for all NAAQS and for all California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) except the one-hour and eight-hour ozone (O<sub>3</sub>) standards and respirable particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>) standard. The primary sources of O<sub>3</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> in the NCAAB are from automobile engine combustion. To address exceedance of these CAAQS, the MBARD has developed and implemented several plans including the 2005 Particulate Matter Plan, the 2007 Federal Maintenance Plan, and the AQMP, a revision to the 2012 Triennial Plan. NCCAB Attainment Status to National and California Ambient Air Quality can be found in **Table 3** below.

Table 3. North Central Coast Air Basin Attainment Status – January 2015		
Pollutant	State Standards <sup>1</sup>	National Standards
Ozone (O <sub>3</sub> )	<b>Nonattainment</b> <sup>2</sup>	Attainment/Unclassified <sup>3</sup>
Inhalable Particulates (PM <sub>10</sub> )	<b>Nonattainment</b>	Attainment
Fine Particulates (PM <sub>2.5</sub> )	Attainment	Attainment/Unclassified <sup>4</sup>
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	Monterey Co. – Attainment San Benito Co. – Unclassified Santa Cruz Co. – Unclassified	Attainment/Unclassified
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO <sub>2</sub> )	Attainment	Attainment/Unclassified <sup>5</sup>
Sulfur Dioxide (SO <sub>2</sub> )	Attainment	Attainment <sup>6</sup>
Lead	Attainment	Attainment/Unclassified <sup>7</sup>

Notes:

- 1) State designations based on 2010 to 2012 air monitoring data.
- 2) Effective July 26, 2007, the CARB designated the NCCAB a nonattainment area for the State ozone standard, which was revised in 2006 to include an 8-hour standard of 0.070 ppm.
- 3) On March 12, 2008, EPA adopted a new 8-hour ozone standard of 0.075 ppm. In April 2012, EPA designated the NCCAB attainment/unclassified based on 2009-2011 data.
- 4) This includes the 2006 24-hour standard of 35 µg/m<sup>3</sup> and the 2012 annual standard of 12 µg/m<sup>3</sup>.
- 5) In 2012, EPA designated the entire state as attainment/unclassified for the 2010 NO<sub>2</sub> standard.
- 6) In June 2011, the CARB recommended to EPA that the entire state be designated as attainment for the 2010 primary SO<sub>2</sub> standard. Final designations to be addressed in future EPA actions.
- 7) On October 15, 2008 EPA substantially strengthened the national ambient air quality standard for lead by lowering the level of the primary standard from 1.5 µg/m<sup>3</sup> to 0.15 µg/m<sup>3</sup>. Final designations were made by EPA in November 2011.
- 8) Nonattainment designations are highlighted in **Bold**.

Source: MBARD, January 2015.

Plans to attain these standards already accommodate the future growth projections available at the time these plans were prepared. Any development project capable of generating air pollutant emissions exceeding regionally-established criteria is considered significant for purposes of CEQA, whether or not such emissions have been accounted for in regional air planning. Any project that would directly cause or substantially contribute to a localized violation of an air quality standard would generate substantial air pollution impacts. The same is true for a project that generates a substantial increase in health risks from toxic air contaminants.

## CONCLUSIONS:

### 3(a). Conclusion: No Impact.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15125(b) requires an evaluation of project consistency with applicable regional plans, including the AQMP. As stated above, the MBARD has developed and implemented several plans to address exceedance of State air quality standards, including the MBARD 2012-2015 AQMP. The MBARD is required to update their AQMP once every three years; the most recent update (MBARD, 2017) was approved in March of 2017. This plan addresses attainment of the State ozone standard and federal air quality standard. The AQMP accommodates growth by projecting growth in emissions based on population forecasts prepared by the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) and other indicators.

According to MBARD’s CEQA Air Quality Guidelines, a project that conflicts with or obstructs implementation of the AQMP would have a significant cumulative effect on regional air quality (Source: 43). In order to be determined consistent with the AQMP, a project’s emissions must be accounted for in the growth assumptions of the AQMP (i.e., the population growth and employment growth).

The proposed projects would not result in a substantial increase in employment, nor would the proposed project result in increased population growth. Further, the proposed projects would not change land use designations within the County. The proposed projects would require 6 to 19 full time employees and an estimated 10-20 additional seasonal staff at each site. As the proposed cannabis operations were previously used for other agricultural activities, the employment provided by the proposed projects would be mostly transferred employment opportunities from existing uses, and the overall increase or decrease in employment in the County would be minor. Therefore, the proposed projects’ employment would not be anticipated to pull population from outside of the area that would represent a substantial population increase not accounted for in the AQMP. In addition, per AMBAG’s 2018 Regional Growth Forecast, employment in the region is forecasted to grow from 337,600 employees in 2015 to 395,000 employees in 2040. Therefore, the region is forecasted to accommodate a large growth in employment and the proposed projects’ potential employment growth would be consistent with the anticipated growth in the region (Source: 1). Therefore, the proposed projects would be consistent with the MBARD 2012-2015 AQMP. In addition, as noted in 3(b), below, the proposed projects would not result in a significant increase in emissions. For these reasons, implementation of the proposed projects is not anticipated to result in a substantial increase in either direct or indirect emissions that would conflict with or obstruct implementation of the AQMP. This impact would be less than significant.

**3(b). Conclusion. Less than Significant.**

METHODOLOGY

*Significance Thresholds*

The MBARD 2008 CEQA Air Quality Guidelines contains standards of significance for evaluating potential air quality effects of projects subject to the requirements of CEQA (see Table 5-1, pg. 5-14, of the MBARD 2008 CEQA Guidelines). According to MBARD, a project would violate an air quality standard and/or contribute to an existing or projected violation if it would exceed the thresholds shown in **Table 4** below. Criteria pollutant emissions associated with the proposed project were calculated using the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod) Version 2016.3.2, which are included in **Appendix A** (Source: 40).



Table 4. Air Quality Thresholds of Significance		
Pollutant	Construction Thresholds (Source)	Operation Thresholds (Source)
NO <sub>x</sub>	N/A	137 lbs/day (direct and indirect)
VOC	N/A	137 lbs/day (direct and indirect)
PM <sub>10</sub>	82 lbs/day (direct)	82 lbs/day (on-site)
SO <sub>x</sub> as SO <sub>2</sub>	N/A	150 lbs/day (direct)
CO	N/A	550 lbs/day (direct)
Notes: VOC = volatile organic compounds (also referred to as ROG, or reactive organic gases); SO <sub>x</sub> = sulfur oxides; lbs/day = pounds per day Source: MBARD, 2008.		

The CO thresholds provided by MBARD are designed to screen out projects from further analysis that would have a less than significant impact to CO; however, projects that exceed these screening thresholds would not necessarily result in a hotspot. Localized CO concentrations are primarily the result of the volume of cars along a road and the level of emissions generated by vehicles. Restricted traffic flows can contribute to higher volumes of vehicles on a given roadway in a period of time, but are not the cause of high CO concentrations. Stringent vehicle emission standards in California have reduced the level of CO emissions generated by vehicles over time such that CO hotspots are rarely a concern, except for roadways with very high traffic volumes. Because MBARD only provides screening thresholds for CO hotspot impacts but does not have a standard for assessing whether a project’s CO hotspot impacts would be significant, the CO threshold from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), which is the air district immediately adjacent to MBARD to the north, is utilized in this analysis. The BAAQMD has established a volume of 44,000 vehicles per hour as the level above which traffic volumes may contribute to a violation of CO standards (Source: 2). The BAAQMD threshold is appropriate to use for a project under the jurisdiction of MBARD, as MBARD has similar climatic conditions to BAAQMD (cool-summer Mediterranean climate) and both air districts are currently in attainment for CO. This threshold is applied in the following impact analysis to determine whether the project would result in an exceedance of CO standards.

*Construction Assumptions*

The Coasta Bella project includes the construction of new cannabis facilities. The proposed facilities would involve the construction of a 16,128-sf greenhouse, 25,000-sf distribution/manufacturing/processing facility, and 4,500-sf processing facility (on the Gold Coast Gardens parcel), totaling approximately 45,628 sf (approximately 1.05 acres). All new buildings would have metal roof panels and corrugated metal wall panels. The proposed project would not require any demolition activities. The site is relatively flat, and the construction of the new buildings would require minimal grading. According to the MBARD’s criteria for determining construction impacts (as updated February 2008), a project would result in a potentially significant impact if it would result in 8.1 acres of minimal earthmoving per day or 2.2 acres per day with major grading and excavation. As the entire area of disturbance for construction of the proposed Coasta Bella project would be less than 1.5 acres and would not require major grading or excavation, the proposed project is below the threshold. In addition, the proposed project would also implement standard construction Best Management Practices (BMPs) related to dust

suppression, which would include: 1) watering active construction areas; 2) prohibiting grading activities during periods of high wind (over 15 mph); 3) covering trucks hauling soil; and 4) covering exposed stockpiles. The implementation of BMPs would further ensure that potential construction-related emissions associated with the proposed Coasta Bella project would be minimized. As a result, construction emissions for this proposed project were not calculated by CalEEMod.

The proposed Coasta Bella project and other ~~four~~<sup>six</sup> proposed projects would involve minor greenhouse retrofit work and on-site improvements, as discussed in Section II, Description of the Proposed Projects. These proposed improvements would not require any demolition or construction of new facilities, and would not be anticipated to require heavy construction equipment or activities such as grading. The proposed improvements would be similar to existing maintenance and upkeep of the previous uses on site, and, therefore, these emissions are accounted for in the region. In addition, the duration of the proposed activities would be temporary and intermittent.

#### *Operational Assumptions*

Operational emissions were estimated for the maximum buildout operations for all five cultivation sites: total of 1,156,854 sf of cultivation and 92,689 sf of additional cannabis facilities (i.e., processing, distribution, and manufacturing facilities).<sup>6</sup> All five sites are applying for permits to conduct cultivation in greenhouses using mixed-light; none include indoor cannabis cultivation exclusively using artificial lighting, which has a higher energy use than greenhouses. Processing, distribution, and manufacturing facilities would occur indoor within designated buildings, as shown on each project site plan. Typically, greenhouses use less energy than indoor buildings as the lighting requirement is much lower in greenhouses, and thus, would have higher energy uses than greenhouses.

For operational emissions, although four of the five sites have already switched to cannabis operations, in order to determine the full impact of the proposed projects, all five sites were assumed to be cut flower operations as mentioned in Section II, Description of the Proposed Projects, for the comparison to the proposed cannabis uses.

Due to the similar operations for cut flower and cannabis cultivation, there would be similar model inputs, which are described below. For operational architectural coating emissions, it was assumed that no repainting would occur for the cultivation space that would occur in greenhouses, as the growing facilities would not have to be painted. The indoor building uses were assumed to be repainted using CalEEMod defaults.

CalEEMod was also used to determine GHG emissions. As the inputs for GHG emissions are interconnected for determining criteria pollutants, the following discussion describes the methodology for determining GHG emissions. The results of the GHG emissions analysis are discussed in detail in Section 8, Greenhouse Gas Emissions. Area sources of GHG emissions include fireplace/woodstoves, landscaping equipment exhaust, and consumer products. While

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<sup>6</sup> Total square footage of additional cannabis facilities used for CalEEMod was based on maximum building area minus cultivation area. Actual total square footage of additional cannabis facilities is 87,290 sf. Please refer to **Table 2**.

consumer products are primarily sources of reactive organic gas emissions, they do not generally emit measurable GHG emissions, with the exception of fertilizers used in plant production. No fireplaces would be associated with any of the proposed projects, and the County does not allow the burning of cannabis waste on the project sites. Therefore, the area sources assessed in this analysis are limited to landscaping equipment exhaust and fertilizers associated with the project sites. Application of nitrogen-based fertilizers results in the release of N<sub>2</sub>O, which volatilizes over time. Efficient application of fertilizers has implications on GHG emissions, crop yield, and production costs (due to the cost of the fertilizer). Published data regarding the nitrogen-based fertilizer application rate for cannabis cultivation is limited. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has studied ideal “benchmark” application rates by region for maximization of a crop yield for crops including corn, cotton, and wheat (Source: 52). Benchmark application rates for these crops range from 85 to 174 pounds per acre. This was multiplied through the proposed projects’ cultivation square footage and the Global Warming Potential (GWP) of N<sub>2</sub>O of 298, which is used by CalEEMod. This was assumed for both the existing cut flower operations and the proposed cannabis operations.

The operational year for cut flower and cannabis operations was assumed to be 2019, since the majority of the facilities are already operational and an earlier start year results in higher and, therefore, more conservative emissions than later operational years, which assume lower emissions from more efficient vehicles.

The 2019 average distance per trip for all trips within Monterey County was used for trip lengths for both cut flowers and cannabis facilities, which according to EMFAC2014 is 6.22 miles.<sup>7</sup>

Impacts associated with wastewater services and infrastructure typically relate to municipal wastewater, such as sewage. Given the agricultural nature of cannabis cultivation, it is not anticipated that the implementation of the proposed projects would result in substantial new wastewater generation, as cannabis cultivation and other agricultural operations typically result only in the generation of agricultural runoff from outdoor cultivation sites and disposal of mineral-nutrient-rich water used in hydroponic operations that are addressed and regulated separately from municipal wastewater. Wastewater generated by the facilities would include restrooms, which are included in the indoor building uses as described in Section II, Description of the Proposed Projects, and shown in the site plans.

The differing model inputs from existing and proposed project emissions are described below.

#### *Existing*

Mobile emissions were based on trip generation rates provided in the traffic study (**Appendix B**, Source: 41). Per the study, a cut flower farm was observed generating an average daily traffic (ADT) rate of 0.78 trips per 1,000 sf. This rate was assumed only for the cultivation square footage.

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<sup>7</sup> The CARB maintains the Emission FACTors (EMFAC) model to assess emissions from on-road vehicles including cars, trucks, and buses in California. EMFAC2014 is the latest emissions inventory model that calculates emissions inventories for motor vehicles operations on roads in California.

As described in Section 19(b), cut flower operations water use was determined to use 3.6 acre-feet per year (AFY) per acre.

Although a cut flower farm would generate energy use from similar uses to cannabis production (e.g., ventilation, heating and cooling, lighting, etc.) to be conservative and due to the uncertainty about the intensity of cut flower farm energy use, this component of baseline emissions activities for greenhouse uses is not further evaluated and baseline energy use from cut flower greenhouses is assumed to be zero. Default CalEEMod rates for manufacturing use were used for the building uses.

Although a cut flower farm would generate solid waste disposal rate from similar activities to cannabis production (e.g., vegetative and materials handling waste), to be conservative and due to the uncertainty about the intensity of cut flower solid waste disposal rates, this component of the baseline emissions activities for cut flower greenhouses is not further evaluated and baseline solid waste rates are assumed to be zero.

#### *Proposed*

Per the traffic study, the proposed projects would generate an ADT ranging from 0.75 to 1.03 trips per 1,000 sf of cultivation, depending on the specific site. The highest trip rate, 1.03, was assumed for use in CalEEMod.

An average water rate for cannabis operations to estimate project water use, determined in Section 18(b), is 0.94 AFY per acre.

According to a cannabis waste management firm with client throughout California, a mid-sized cannabis operation produces 250 to 500 pounds of waste per day (Source: 54). Cannabis cultivation waste includes plant and soil waste, as well as waste from other materials such as container used during cultivation, trash, and discarded piping and equipment (Source: 54). Plant and soil waste may be composted on site to be reused. However, for the purposes of this analysis, it is assumed that all waste would be hauled to a solid waste disposal site, and that each of the five ~~facilities~~ sites would dispose of 500 pounds per day, 365 days per year (4,289 tons per year in total). This rate was assumed for both greenhouse and building square footage.

Energy use for greenhouses and indoor buildings are discussed separately below. Typically, greenhouses use less energy than indoor buildings as the lighting requirement is much lower in greenhouses. MCC Sections 21.67.050.B.9 and 20.67.050.B.9 require all indoor cannabis cultivation activities (cultivation activities including Type 1A, 1C, 2A, 3A, and 4 state license types using artificial light only) to generate energy demand through renewable energy. However, all ~~five~~ seven proposed projects are applying for permits to conduct cultivation in greenhouses using mixed-light; none include indoor cannabis cultivation.

A California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) workshop report on the potential impacts from marijuana legalization found that in Washington state, indoor cultivators operating year-round were consuming approximately 150 Watts/sf of energy (Source: 18). Greenhouses operating 30 to 50 percent of the year were consuming about 60 Watts/sf of energy. While none of the proposed projects would include indoor cultivation (projects are proposing use of mixed-light operations exclusively), it is assumed that the five sites would be operating year-round, and, thus, energy use

inputted into CalEEMod conservatively assumed 150 Watts/sf of greenhouse cultivation. However, it is acknowledged that some greenhouses would have periods of less intensive energy use during different cycles of cultivation, as well as overall lower energy use since none are proposing indoor cultivation.

As sources of energy use for processing, distribution, and manufacturing for indoor cannabis activities would be similar to common manufacturing activities, energy demand was estimated using CalEEMod standard rates for manufacturing uses.

## IMPACT ANALYSIS

### *Construction*

As stated above, the entire area of disturbance for construction of the proposed Coasta Bella project would be less than 1.5 acres and would not require major grading or excavation, the proposed project is below the MBARD threshold. In addition, the proposed project would also implement standard construction Best Management Practices (BMPs) related to dust suppression, which would include: 1) watering active construction areas; 2) prohibiting grading activities during periods of high wind (over 15 mph); 3) covering trucks hauling soil; and 4) covering exposed stockpiles. The implementation of BMPs would further ensure that potential construction-related emissions associated with the proposed Coasta Bella project would be minimized. As a result, construction emissions for this proposed project were not calculated by CalEEMod.

The proposed Coast Bella project and other ~~four~~<sup>six</sup> proposed projects would involve minor greenhouse retrofit work and on-site improvements, as discussed in Section II, Description of the Proposed Projects. These proposed improvements would not require any demolition or construction of new facilities, and would not be anticipated to require heavy construction equipment or activities such as grading. The proposed improvements would be similar to existing maintenance and upkeep of the previous uses on site, and, therefore, these emissions are accounted for in the region. In addition, the duration of the proposed activities would be temporary and intermittent.

Therefore, construction emissions resulting from the proposed projects would be less than significant.

### *Operation*

**Table 5** presents the existing operational criteria pollutant emissions for cut flower operations and the proposed projects' operational criteria pollutant emissions for cannabis operations, including the net change in emissions from cannabis operations. As shown in **Table 5**, there would be a net change in emissions for all criteria pollutants, mostly due to higher vehicle trips and energy use associated with cannabis operations. However, the proposed projects and net change for these pollutants are well below MBARD's thresholds and would not result in significant air quality impacts. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

<b>Table 5. Operational Emissions</b>					
<b>Emission Source</b>	<b>Pollutants (pounds/day)</b>				
	<b>Reactive Organic Gases (ROG)</b>	<b>Nitrogen Oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>)</b>	<b>Carbon Monoxide (CO)</b>	<b>Particulate Matter (&lt;10 microns [PM<sub>10</sub>])</b>	<b>Sulfur Dioxide (SO<sub>x</sub>)</b>
<b>Existing (Cut Flower)</b>					
Area	32.18	0.0012	0.13	0.0005	0.0001
Energy	0.05	0.42	0.35	0.03	0.0025
Mobile	3.46	15.89	46.17	8.59	0.1165
<b>Emissions Subtotal</b>	<b>35.69</b>	<b>16.30</b>	<b>46.65</b>	<b>8.62</b>	<b>0.12</b>
<b>Proposed Projects (Cannabis)</b>					
Area	31.51	0.0012	0.13	0.0005	0.0001
Energy	0.07	0.66	0.55	0.05	0.0039
Mobile	3.54	16.24	47.06	9.62	0.1274
<b>Emissions Subtotal</b>	<b>35.13</b>	<b>16.90</b>	<b>47.74</b>	<b>9.67</b>	<b>0.13</b>
<b>Net</b>					
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>0.56</b>	<b>0.60</b>	<b>1.09</b>	<b>1.05</b>	<b>0.01</b>
MBARD Threshold	137	137	550 <sup>1</sup>	82	150
Are Thresholds Exceeded?	No	No	No	No	No
Notes: Area source emissions include natural gas fuel combustion, landscape fuel combustion, consumer products, and architectural coatings. (1) Applies to Area Source (Direct) emissions of Carbon Monoxide only. Source: CalEEMod v. 2013.2.2 and Kimley-Horn and Associates, 2020.					

**3(c). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

A “sensitive receptor” is generally defined as any residence including private homes, condominiums, apartments, and living quarters; education resources such as preschools and kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12) schools; daycare centers; and health care facilities such as hospitals or retirement and nursing homes (Source: 43). Due to the rural and agricultural nature of the project sites, the only type of sensitive receptor near the sites are single-family residential homes on or adjacent to the project sites. Each of the subject properties either contain on-site, or is immediately adjacent to, a single-family residence. Other rural residences also occur in the vicinity of the proposed projects. In accordance with MCC Section 21.67.050.B.4, none of the proposed projects are located within 600 feet of a school or public park. Exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations could occur during construction activities from diesel particulate matter or fugitive dust (e.g., the Coasta Bella project) or during operation from CO hotspots and emergency generators.

## CONSTRUCTION

Construction activities associated with the Coasta Bella project could expose sensitive receptors to diesel particulate matter from construction equipment and fugitive dust from grading. However, the construction of the proposed cannabis facilities (e.g., new 16,128 SF greenhouse, a 25,000 SF distribution, manufacturing, and processing building, and a 4,500 SF processing building) are not expected to require the use of large diesel-powered construction equipment or grading that would exceed MBARD construction thresholds (see above). Compliance with applicable MBARD regulations, including, but not limited to, Rule 402 would minimize potential nuisance impacts to occupants of nearby land uses. For these reasons, construction activities associated with the Coasta Bella project would be considered to have a less-than-significant impact to nearby receptors. Therefore, potential impacts resulting from construction activities to sensitive receptors would be less than significant.

The other proposed projects would not involve new construction and only minor site improvements, and, therefore, potential impacts to sensitive receptors would be less than significant.

## OPERATION

### *CO Hotspots*

Buildout of the proposed projects would result in new cannabis operations that would generate additional vehicle trips on area roadways. Areas with high vehicle density, such as congested intersections, have the potential to create concentrations of CO (“CO hotspots”) and could potentially expose sensitive receptors to harmful level of pollution. The NAAQS for CO is 35.0 ppm and the CAAQS for CO is 20.0 ppm. Localized CO concentrations are the result of the volume of cars along a road and the level of emissions generated by vehicles, rather than the flow of traffic, and vehicle CO emissions have declined over time due to stringent State standards for vehicle emissions and would continue to decline as more stringent standards are put in place. The BAAQMD has determined that 44,000 vehicles per hour to be the level of which traffic volumes may contribute to a violation of CO standards (as discussed under Significance Threshold above, Source: 2). The road and highway segments in the project area would not have hourly traffic volumes exceeding 44,000 vehicles under buildout of the proposed projects (Source: 35, 41). Therefore, the proposed project would not result in volumes of traffic that would create, or substantially contribute to, the exceedance of NAAQS or CAAQS for CO, and impacts would be less than significant.

### *Generators*

Generators could also result in emissions of diesel particulate matter. The existing cut flower industry also use emergency generators for similar purposes to cannabis operations; therefore, the proposed projects’ use of generators for emergencies would not represent a new source of diesel particulate matter. The proposed projects would also be required to implement DCC’s regulations for cannabis cultivation for power sources and generator emissions. DCC regulations 15011(a)(5), 16304(a)(4), 16305, and 16306 provide: identification of all power sources for cultivation activities for indoor and mixed-light license types, including but not limited to, illumination, heating, cooling, and ventilation; renewable energy requirements; and generator requirements.

The renewable energy regulations require all indoor, tier 2 mixed-light license types of all sizes, and nurseries using indoor or tier 2 mixed-light techniques shall ensure that electrical power used for commercial cannabis activity meets the average electricity greenhouse gas emissions intensity required by their local utility provider pursuant to the California Renewables Portfolio Standard Program, beginning January 1, 2023. Additionally, portable equipment may be subject to regulation by MBARD, which requires a Permit to Operate be obtained for stationary equipment such as emergency generators, hash oil processing, and boilers greater than 2 MMBTU/hour for natural gas or 250,000 BTU/hour for other fuels. MBARD also requires an Authority to Construct be obtained for odor control device, fume hoods, and engine generator sets. With required compliance with the DCC regulations, exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations from emergency generators would be less than significant.

**3(d). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

The proposed projects involve cannabis cultivation as well as drying and processing of cannabis grown on-site. These activities can produce potentially objectionable odors during the flowering, harvest, drying, and processing stages. Odors could disperse through the air from prevailing winds from the west and can be sensed off-site to the east by receptors.

Health and Safety Code Section 41705 exempts agricultural operations from odor related nuisances. Therefore, the proposed cannabis operations are considered to be agricultural and odors resulting from operations would not constitute a legal nuisance.

Nonetheless and as discussed in 3(c) above, the only type of sensitive receptor near the sites are single-family residential homes on or adjacent to the sites. Odors are already prevalent from a variety of crops and odors produced by fertilizer treatments from existing farming activities in the project area. While farmlands can often incorporate large setbacks from neighboring uses and sensitive receptors, even with appropriate siting, cannabis uses can subject some people to objectionable odors.

To address potential odor impacts from commercial cannabis operations on nearby sensitive receptor uses, Section 7.90.100.A.8 of the MCC requires all commercial cannabis applicants to incorporate odor prevention devices and techniques, such as a ventilation system with a carbon filter, to ensure that odors from cannabis are not detectable offsite. In addition, per MCC Section 7.90.100.A.16, the facilities must provide a contact that the public can reach to provide notice of issues with the cannabis operation, including odors. Given this mandatory odor control standard, the proposed projects would not subject a substantial number of people to objectionable odors and impacts would be less than significant.



<b>4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES</b>			Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>	Potentially Significant Impact				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

**DISCUSSION/CONCLUSIONS:**

**4(a-d). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

Information regarding the biological resources at the project sites is based on the Monterey County Medical Marijuana Regulations Initial Study prepared in May 2016 to address the County ordinances amending Title 20 and Title 21 of the MCC, requiring a CDP in the Coastal Zone or a Use Permit in the inland zone to conduct commercial medical cannabis activities on a property in the unincorporated areas of the County (Source: 32).

In addition, a reconnaissance survey was conducted at each site on July 17, 2019, by DD&A Senior Environmental Scientist Erin Harwayne to characterize habitats present within the site and to identify any special-status plant or wildlife species or suitable habitat for these species within and

adjacent to the project sites. Available reference materials were reviewed prior to conducting the field survey. The primary literature and data sources reviewed to determine the occurrence or potential for occurrence of special-status species at the site are as follows: California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) occurrence reports from the United States Geological Survey (USGS) Watsonville East and Prunedale quadrangles and surrounding quadrangles (Loma Prieta, Mount Madonna, Gilroy, Chittenden, San Juan Bautista, Natividad, Salinas, Marina, Moss Landing, and Watsonville West) (CDFW, 2019); current agency status information from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for species listed, proposed for listing, or candidates for listing as Threatened or Endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) or the California Endangered Species Act (CESA); and those considered CDFW “species of special concern”; and the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) *Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California* (CNPS, 2019). Data collected during the survey was used to assess the environmental conditions of the site and its surroundings, and provide a basis for recommendations to minimize and avoid impacts.

All of the project sites are largely developed with existing greenhouses and agricultural support structures. While there are numerous biological resources found throughout the County, the proposed project sites are relatively flat and primarily unvegetated with some areas of ruderal vegetation and ornamental trees. The sites have been graded, disturbed, and developed. A developed habitat type includes all areas that are planted and maintained as landscaped areas. These habitats often host a wide variety of invasive and ruderal species, and have marginal value for wildlife due to the lack of vegetation and ongoing human disturbance. Wildlife species that typically utilize these areas are generally adapted to human disturbance (e.g., skunks, raccoons, crows, etc.). The only aquatic resource near the project sites is the Pajaro River, which runs along the north of a levee adjacent to the Coasta Bella and Gold Coast Gardens. The Pajaro River is sensitive habitat for woodland woolly threads. However, these proposed projects do not propose any activities that would affect the levee, occur within the levee easement, or affect any potential suitable habitat for woodland woolly threads (i.e., grassland, chaparral, and woodland, often on serpentine soils).

In accordance with DCC regulation 15011(a)(8), each project applicant must provide a copy of any final Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement (LSAA) issued by the CDFW, pursuant to Section 1602 and 1617 of the Fish and Game Code, or written verification from the DCC that a LSAA is not required. The LSAAs provide actions to avoid and minimize potential impacts and provide protections to fish and wildlife resources. In addition, pursuant to DCC regulation 15011(a)(11), if applicable, the applicant shall provide evidence that the premises are not located in whole or part in a watershed or other geographic area that the SWRCB or CDFW has determined to be significantly adversely impacted by cannabis cultivation. Furthermore, DCC regulations 15001.2(d)(1) and (2) state that if the SWRCB or CDFW notifies the DCC in writing that cannabis cultivation is causing significant adverse impacts on the environment in a watershed or other geographic area or is not in compliance with any final streambed alteration agreement pursuant to Section 26060.1(a) or (b) of the Business and Professions Code, the Department shall not issue new licenses or increase the total number of plant identifiers within that watershed or area while the moratorium is in effect.

General environmental protection measures are provided in DCC regulation 16304(a). All licensees shall comply with following measures: (1) compliance with section 13149 of the Water Code as implemented by the SWRCB, Regional Water Quality Control Boards, or CDFW; (2) compliance with any conditions requested by CDFW or SWRCB under section 26060.1(b)(1) of the Business and Professions Code; (3) requirements in section 7050.5(b) of the Health and Safety Code if human remains are discovered; (4) requirements for generators pursuant to section 16306; (5) requirements for pesticides pursuant to section 16307; (6) all outdoor lighting used for safety or security purposes shall be shielded and downward facing; and (7) lights used for indoor or mixed-light cultivation are shielded from sunset to sunrise to avoid nighttime glare.

Because cannabis cultivation is not authorized under federal law, it may not be possible for certain applicants to be in strict compliance with federal requirements. As a result, federal requirements that would normally address impacts (e.g., requirements of the USFWS included with an incidental take authorization under ESA) cannot be relied upon.

As the project sites are currently developed, do not contain suitable habitat for sensitive species, do not contain any sensitive habitat, and there would be no habitat modifications, the proposed projects would not impact special-status species, riparian habitats or other sensitive natural communities, federally protected wetlands, or native resident or migratory wildlife corridors. Therefore, the proposed projects would have a less-than-significant impact on these biological resources.

**4(e) and (f). Conclusion: No Impact.**

The proposed projects involve the conversion of existing agricultural greenhouses and support structures and construction of new cannabis facilities at one of the sites. The proposed projects do not require tree removal. The proposed projects would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources or conflict with an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. Therefore, there would be no impact.

<b>5. CULTURAL RESOURCES</b>		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>					
a)	Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b)	Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c)	Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## **DISCUSSION:**

The General Plan, Chapter 3.0 provides policies for the conservation and identification of the County's archaeological resources. Specifically, development within the identified sensitivity areas is encouraged to avoid impacts to these resources. According to General Plan Policy OS-6.3, "New development proposed within moderate or high sensitivity zones, or within 150 feet of a known recorded archaeological and/or cultural site, shall complete a Phase I survey including use of the regional State Office of Historic Preservation or the California Native American Heritage Commission's list of sacred and traditional sites. Routine and Ongoing Agricultural Activities shall be exempted from this policy in so far as allowed by state or federal law." The NC LUP also recognizes the cultural, historic, and architectural sites in North County. Specifically, Policy 2.9.2(2) requires development, including any proposed grading or excavation activity or removal of vegetation for agricultural use, to have an archaeological survey if it is located:

- a) within 100 yards of the floodways of the Pajaro or Salinas Rivers, McCluskey, Bennett, Elkhorn, Moro Cojo, or Tembladero Sloughs, the Old Salinas River Channel or Moss Landing Harbor;
- b) within 100 yards of any known archaeological site.

## **CONCLUSIONS:**

### **5(a-c). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

The project sites are located in areas of "high" archaeological sensitivity, with the exception of 12/12 Genetics, which is located in an area of "moderate" archaeological sensitivity (Source: 33). The four inland project sites are subject to routine, on-going agricultural activities, and, thus, are not required to complete a Phase 1 survey. The 12/12 Genetics site is subject to the NC LUP; however, it is not proposing any grading or excavation activity or removal of vegetation and is not located in the areas specified in NC LUP Policy 2.9.2(2). Therefore, this project is not required to have an archaeological survey.

Although the proposed projects are located within moderate or high archaeological sensitivity zones, these sites are already developed, currently in agricultural use, and, with the exception of the Coasta Bella project, are not proposing any new construction. Coasta Bella is the only project proposing any new development, which would consist of three new metal buildings for cannabis cultivation and processing (including one new metal building on the Gold Coast Gardens parcel). The construction would occur in previously disturbed areas and would not affect depths greater than already affected by previous development activities. As a result, the potential for impacts to historical resources, archaeological resources, or human remains is low.

Furthermore, the proposed projects would be required to implement the County's standard project Condition of Approval (COA), which requires the contractor to stop work if previously unidentified resources are discovered on site until evaluated by a qualified professional archaeologist. When contacted, the project planner and the archaeologist must immediately visit the site to determine the extent of the resources and to develop proper mitigation measures required for avoidance or recovery. Mitigation measures may include, but would not be limited to, capping of the area containing the resource using culturally sterile and chemically neutral fill materials, and/or construction monitoring. If human remains are encountered during construction, existing

regulations, including DCC Section 16304(a)(3), would require that work within the area cease and that the Monterey County Coroner be notified immediately. Pursuant to PRC 5097.98, if remains are determined to be of Native American descent, then the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) must be notified within 24 hours. The NAHC would contact the designated Most Likely Descendent who would provide recommendations for the treatment of remains within 24 hours.

Therefore, given the minimal ground disturbance required and compliance with existing County and State regulations, the proposed projects would not cause substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource or archaeological resource, or impacts to human remains. This impact would be less than significant.

<b>6. ENERGY</b>		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>					
a)	Result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy, or wasteful use of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b)	Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**DISCUSSION:**

This section describes existing energy use at the State and regional level and evaluates the extent to which the proposed projects could result in wasteful consumption of energy resources or conflict with regulations related to energy use.

NATURAL GAS

In 2018, California used approximately 12,700 million U.S. therms (MMthm) of natural gas (Source: 13, 14). PG&E is the primary provider of natural gas for the rural and urban communities within the County, including the project sites. **Table 6** identifies the natural gas consumption by entity served by PG&E and other utility providers statewide in 2018 (Source: 13, 14). As shown in **Table 6**, Agricultural and Water Pump activities consumed approximately 37.2 MMthm in the PG&E service area.

Utility	Agriculture & Water Pump	Commercial Building	Commercial Other	Industry	Mining & Construction	Residential	Total Usage
PG&E	37.2	899.1	59.0	1,776.0	190.2	1,832.8	<b>4,794.4</b>
Other Utility Providers	81.7	1,150.9	109.5	3,560.4	2,184.9	2,560.7	<b>7872.2</b>
<b>Total in State</b>	<b>118.9</b>	<b>2,050.0</b>	<b>168.5</b>	<b>3,560.4</b>	<b>2,375.1</b>	<b>4,393.4</b>	<b>12,666.4</b>

*Source: 13, 18*

## ELECTRICITY

In 2018, approximately 285,488 gigawatt-hours (GWh) of electricity was used in California. Starting in 2018, all PG&E customers within Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz Counties were automatically enrolled in Central Coast Community Energy (CCCE) (formerly Monterey Bay Community Power, MBCP). CCCE is a locally-controlled public agency providing carbon-free electricity to residents and businesses. Formed in February 2017, CCCE is a joint powers authority, and is based on a local energy model called community choice energy. CCCE partners with PG&E, which continues to provide billing, power transmission and distribution, customer service, grid maintenance services, and natural gas services to Monterey County. CCCE's standard electricity offering, is carbon free and is classified as 30 percent renewable. Of the electricity provided by CCCE in 2018, 40 percent was hydroelectric, and 30 percent was solar and wind (eligible renewables). All five of the project sites are served by CCCE. **Table 7** identifies the electricity used in the PG&E service area in 2018; Agricultural and Water Pump activities consumed approximately 5,735 GWh.

Agriculture & Water Pump	Commercial Building	Commercial Other	Industry	Mining & Construction	Residential	Streetlight	Total Usage
5,735	29,650	4,195	10,345	1,567	27,965	319	<b>79,776</b>

*Source: 16*

## PETROLEUM

California has the fifth-largest share of U.S. crude oil reserve and is the seventh-largest producer of crude oil in the nation. Reservoirs in the geologic basins along the Pacific Coast, including the Los Angeles basin, and the State's Central Valley contain major crude oil reserves. California ranks third in the nation in petroleum refining capacity, after Texas and Louisiana. California is the second-largest consumer of petroleum products in the nation and the largest consumer of motor gasoline and jet fuel. Almost nine-tenths of the petroleum consumed in the state is used in the transportation sector.

In 2015, the total amount of energy consumed by the transportation sector in California was equal to 23.2 billion gallons of gasoline, including 15.5 billion gallons of finished gasoline and 3.7 billion gallons of diesel. In 2017, transportation accounted for 40% of total energy use, and in 2015, transportation was estimated to be the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions. Though California's population and economy are expected to grow, gasoline demand is projected to decline from roughly 15.8 billion gallons in 2017 to between 12.3 billion and 12.7 billion gallons in 2030, a 20 to 22 percent reduction. This decline comes in response to both increasing vehicle electrification and higher fuel economy for new gasoline vehicles (Source: 15).

## CANNABIS BACKGROUND

Cultivation equipment, particularly the lighting and climate control equipment required for indoor and mixed-light operations, requires a relatively large amount of energy (mostly electric) for operation. Specific energy uses for indoor grow operations include high-intensity lighting, dehumidification to remove water vapor and avoid mold formation, space heating or cooling during non-illuminated period and drying processes, preheating of irrigation water, generation of CO<sub>2</sub> from fossil fuel combustion, and ventilation and air conditioning to remove waste heat (Source: 42). Lighting is the greatest contributor to energy use (Source: 42). Reliance on equipment can vary widely as a result of factors such as plant spacing, layout, and the surrounding climate of a given facility.

A CPUC workshop report on the potential impacts from marijuana legalization found that in Washington state, indoor cultivators operating year-round were consuming approximately 150 Watts/sf of energy (Source: 18). Greenhouses operating 30 to 50 percent of the year were consuming about 40 Watts/sf of energy, and greenhouses operating 15 percent of the year were consuming less than 5 Watts/sf of energy.

One of the proposed projects, 12/12 Genetics, has already replaced old, inefficient heaters with new, energy-efficient heaters, and 200-watt incandescent lights with 35-watt LED lighting. Additionally, state of the art, energy-efficient Schaefer fans have been installed for air movement. The other ~~four~~<sup>six</sup> projects are proposing similar improvements to reduce energy demand.

## REGULATORY SETTING

A description of the California Green Building Standards Code, Building Energy Efficiency Standards, and MCC, with which the proposed projects would be required to comply are provided below.

### *California Green Building Standards Code*

The California Green Building Standards Code, otherwise known as the CALGreen Code (CCR Title 24, Part 11), is a portion of the California Building Standards Code (CBSC), which became effective with the rest of the CBSC on January 1, 2017. The purpose of CALGreen Code is to improve public health, safety, and general welfare by enhancing the design and construction of buildings through the use of building concepts having a reduced negative impacts or positive environmental impact and encouraging sustainable construction practices. The provisions of the code apply to the planning, design, operation, use, and occupancy of every newly constructed

building or structure throughout California. Requirements of the CALGreen Code include, but are not limited to, the following measures:

- Compliance with relevant regulations related to future installation of Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure in residential and non-residential structures;
- Indoor water use consumption is reduced through the establishment of maximum fixture water use rates;
- Outdoor landscaping must comply with the California Department of Water Resources' Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELO), or a local ordinance, whichever is more stringent, to reduce outdoor water use;
- Diversion of 65 percent of construction and demolition waste from landfills;
- Mandatory periodic inspections of energy systems (i.e., heat furnace, air condition, mechanical equipment) for non-residential buildings over 10,000 sf to ensure that all are working at their maximum capacity according to their design efficiencies; and
- Mandatory use of low-pollutant emitting interior finish materials such as paints, carpet, vinyl flooring, and particle board.

#### *Building Energy Efficiency Standards*

The 2016 Building Energy Efficiency Standards is a portion of the CBSC, which expands upon energy-efficiency measures from the 2013 Building Energy Efficiency Standards resulting in a five percent reduction in energy consumption from the 2013 standards for commercial structures. Energy reductions relative to previous Building Energy Efficiency Standards are achieved through various regulations including requirements for the use of high efficacy lighting, improved water heating system efficiency, and high-performance attics and walls.

It should be noted that the 2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards went into effect for building permit applications submitted on or after January 1, 2020. The 2019 standards will provide for additional efficiency improvements beyond the current 2016 standards. Non-residential buildings built in compliance with the 2019 standards are anticipated to use approximately 30 percent less energy compared to the 2016 standards, primarily due to lighting upgrades.

#### *Monterey County Code*

Monterey County Code Sections 21.67.050.B.9 and 20.67.050.B.9 state that “on-site renewable energy generation shall be required for all indoor cultivation activities. Renewable energy systems shall be designed to have a generation potential equal to or greater than one half of the anticipated energy demand.”

#### *Monterey County Municipal Climate Action Plan*

The Monterey County Municipal Climate Action Plan (MCAP), adopted in 2013, outlines the methods to reach the County's goal of reducing municipal GHG emission to 15 percent below 2005 baseline levels by the year 2020. Policies of the MCAP that would be relevant to the proposed projects and involve energy efficiency or renewable energy include the following statewide policies:



- S-1: Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS). Obligates investor-owned utilities (IOUs), energy service providers (ESPs), and Community Choice Aggregations (CCAs) to procure an additional one percent of retail sales per year from eligible renewable sources until 20 percent is reached, no later than 2010. The RPS set forth a longer-range target of procuring 33 percent of retail sales by 2020. SB X 1-2 expands and preempts the RPS to obligate all California electricity retailers in the state (including publicly-owned utilities, IOUs, ESPs, and CCAs) to obtain at least 33 percent of their energy from renewable resources by the year 2020.
- S-2: Pavley (AB 1493) and Advanced Clean Cars. Requires CARB to adopt vehicle standards that will lower GHG emission from new light duty autos to the maximum extent feasible beginning in 2009. Additional strengthening of the Pavley standards (Advanced Clean Cars) has been proposed for vehicle model years 2017-2025. Together, the two standards are expected to increase average fuel economy to roughly 43 miles per gallon by 2020 (and more for years beyond 2020) and reduce GHG emissions from the transportation sector in California by approximately 14 percent.
- S-3: Low Carbon Fuel Standard. Mandates the following: 1) that a statewide goal be established to reduce the carbon intensity of California's transportation fuels by at least 10 percent by 2020, and 2) that a low carbon fuel standard for transportation fuels be established in California.

## CONCLUSIONS:

### 6(a). Conclusion: Less than Significant.

#### CONSTRUCTION

The Coasta Bella project would involve the construction of a new greenhouse and two buildings, totaling approximately 46,000 sf, as well as use of existing greenhouses and buildings at the site. The anticipated construction schedule assumes that the project would be built out over a period of approximately eight months. The construction phase would require energy for the manufacture and transportation of building materials, preparation of the site (e.g., excavation, and grading), and the actual construction of the structures. Petroleum-based fuels such as diesel fuel and gasoline would be the primary sources of energy for these tasks.

The precise amount of construction-related energy consumption is uncertain. However, construction would not require a large amount of fuel or energy usage because of the limited extent and nature of the proposed facilities and the minimal number of construction vehicles and equipment, worker trips, and truck trips that would be required for a project of this small scale.

State and federal regulations require fuel-efficient equipment and vehicles and prohibit wasteful activities, such as diesel idling. For example, all construction equipment and operation thereof would be regulated by the CARB In-Use Off-Road Diesel Vehicle Regulation. The In-Use Off-Road Diesel Vehicle Regulation is intended to reduce emissions from in-use, off-road, heavy-duty diesel vehicles in California by imposing limits on idling, requiring all vehicles to be reported to CARB, restricting the addition of older vehicles into fleets, and requiring fleets to reduce emissions

by retiring, replacing or repowering older engines, or installing exhaust retrofits. This regulation would subsequently help to improve fuel efficiency and reduce GHG emissions.

However, the project would not cause inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary consumption of energy as the construction schedule and process is already designed to be efficient in order to avoid excess monetary costs. Construction contractors, in an effort to ensure cost efficiency, would not be expected to engage in wasteful or unnecessary energy and fuel practices. Therefore, project construction would not encourage activities that would result in the use of large amounts of fuel and energy in a wasteful manner. Energy used required to complete construction would be limited and short-term. The temporary increase in energy use during construction of the Coasta Bella project would not result in a significant increase in peak or base demands or require additional capacity from local or regional energy supplies. In addition, this proposed project would be required to comply with all applicable regulations related to energy conservation and fuel efficiency, which would help to reduce the temporary increase in demand.

The remaining ~~four~~<sup>six</sup> proposed projects would not require demolition or construction of any facilities, and would involve use of existing greenhouses and buildings. These projects are proposing minor improvements to the existing facilities, which would not require the use of heavy equipment or grading. The improvements would be similar to the existing maintenance of the previous uses on the sites, and, therefore, the construction energy demand would be similar to the existing uses, and would not result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources.

## OPERATION

Operational energy demand would occur from gasoline consumption from transportation (vehicle trips) and electricity and natural gas usage for cultivation, manufacturing, processing, and distribution.

Gasoline consumption would be attributed to the trips generate from people employed by the cannabis operations and vendors. As discussed in Section 17, Transportation, per the traffic study, the proposed projects would generate an ADT ranging from 0.75 to 1.03 trips per 1,000 sf of cultivation, depending on the specific site. The highest trip rate, 1.03, was assumed for use in CalEEMod. Also, per the traffic study, a cut flower farm was observed generating an average daily traffic (ADT) rate of 0.78 trips per 1,000 sf.

These rates were used to determine the energy consumption associated with fuel use from the operation of the project. The majority of the fuel consumption would be from motor vehicles traveling to and from the project site.

According to the CalEEMod calculations, the existing cut flower operation would result in an estimated 15,856,818 annual vehicle miles traveled (VMT), and the cumulative proposed projects' cannabis operations would result in an estimated 16,060,111 annual VMT. **Table 8** shows the estimated total annual fuel consumption for existing operations, project operations, and the net change from existing operations to proposed project operations using the estimated VMT with the assumed vehicle fleet mix.

Table 8. Existing and Project Annual Transportation Energy Consumption					
Vehicle Type <sup>1</sup>	Percent of Vehicle Trips <sup>2</sup>	Annual Vehicle Miles Traveled <sup>3</sup>	Average Fuel Economy (miles/gallon) <sup>4</sup>	Total Annual Fuel Consumption (gallons)	Total Fuel Consumption (MBtu) <sup>5</sup>
<b>Existing</b>					
Passenger Cars	52.6	2,084,741	24.2	86,146	9,458
Light/Medium Trucks	38.0	1,506,087	17.5	86,062	9,448
Heavy Trucks/Other	8.6	340,851	6.5	52,439	5,757
Motorcycles	0.8	31,707	43.9	722	793
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>3,963,386</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>225,369</b>	<b>24,742</b>
<b>Proposed Projects</b>					
Passenger Cars	52.6	2,341,207	24.2	96,744	10,621
Light/Medium Trucks	38.8	1,691,366	17.5	96,649	10,611
Heavy Trucks/Other	8.6	385,783	6.5	58,890	6,465
Motorcycles	0.8	35,608	43.9	811	890
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>4,450,964</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>253,094</b>	<b>28,587</b>
<b>Net Change from Existing to Proposed Projects</b>					
Passenger Cars	52.6	256,466	24.2	10,598	1,163
Light/Medium Trucks	38.8	185,279	17.5	10,587	1,163
Heavy Trucks/Other	8.6	44,932	6.5	6,451	708
Motorcycles	0.8	3,901	43.9	89	97
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>487,578</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>27,725</b>	<b>3,131</b>
<p>1. Vehicle classes provided in CalEEMod do not correspond exactly to vehicle classes in DOT fuel consumption data, except for motorcycles. Therefore, it was assumed that passenger cars correspond to the light-duty, short-base vehicle class, light/medium trucks correspond to the light-duty long-base vehicle class, and heavy trucks/other correspond to the single unit, 2-axle 6-tire or more class.</p> <p>2. Percent of vehicle trips from Table 4.4 "Fleet Mix" in CalEEMod Outputs (Appendix A).</p> <p>3. Mitigated annual VMT found in Table 4.2 "Trip Summary Information" in CalEEMod Outputs (Appendix A).</p> <p>4. Average Fuel Economy: Source: 53</p> <p>5. CarFG fuel specification of 109,786 Btu/gallon used to identify conversion rate for fuel energy consumption for vehicle classes specified above.</p> <p>Notes: Totals may not add up due to rounding.</p>					

According to the CalEEMod calculations, operation of the proposed projects would consume approximately 0.94 GWh of electricity and 0.02 MMthm of natural gas per year (**Appendix A**). As stated above, the proposed projects would be served by PG&E and CCCE, which provided 79,776 GWh of electricity and 4,974 MMthm of natural gas in 2018. The project demand represents 0.001 percent and 0.000004 percent of annual electricity and natural gas supply, respectively. As such, the proposed projects do not represent a substantial increase in demand for electricity or natural gas.

In addition, the proposed project would also implement state regulations for cannabis cultivation, contained in Title 4, Division 19, Chapter 7 of the CCR, that are related to energy efficiency and conservation. These regulations were not captured in the estimates above as they are to be implemented by cannabis facilities in the coming years. The regulations would reduce the current levels of GHG emissions produced in the state from indoor and tier 2 mixed-light cultivation (including nurseries using these cultivation techniques) and support the state's GHG reduction target (specifically to assist in achieving the SB 32 goal of reducing statewide GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030). Specifically, the regulations require that beginning January 1, 2022, applications for indoor and tier 2 mixed-light cultivation license renewal must submit data regarding the amount and sources of all electricity used during the previous license period. Beginning January 1, 2023, licenses that have a weighted GHG emission intensity that is greater than the local utility's GHG emission intensity based on RPS will be required to show evidence of carbon offsets or allowances to cover the excess in carbon emissions. The implementation of these measures, required by law, would further reduce the energy demand for the proposed projects' cannabis operations.

Operation of the proposed projects would increase gasoline, electricity, and natural gas consumption due to increased vehicle trips and operational energy needs. However, this increased demand would represent a small proportion of demand from energy providers, and the proposed projects would be required to comply with applicable regulations related to energy efficiency and conservation. Therefore, the proposed projects would not result in significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient or unnecessary consumption of energy, or wasteful use of energy resources, during project operation, and impacts would be less than significant.

**6(b). Conclusion: No Impact.**

The MCAP policies reference statewide laws incorporated by the County into the MCAP, and, therefore, they are implemented at the statewide level. For example, PG&E and CCCE would comply with the RPS to achieve the required reductions. Implementation of the proposed projects would not interfere with PG&E and CCCE's procurement of renewable energy, and the projects' energy use would benefit from the increased energy efficiency of the RPS requirements. Policies S-2 and S-3 would be implemented through increased vehicle fuel efficiency through the vehicles and through the fuel that vehicles use. Implementation of the proposed projects would not interfere with these increased efficiencies, and vehicle use related to the projects would benefit from the increased energy efficiencies of these measures.

In addition to the MCAP policies, DCC state regulations for cannabis cultivation must be implemented for project power sources and emergency generators. DCC regulations sections 15011(a)(5), 16304(a)(4), 16305, and 16306 provide: identification of all power sources for

cultivation activities for indoor and mixed-light license types, including but not limited to, illumination, heating, cooling, and ventilation; renewable energy requirements; and generator requirements. The renewable energy regulations require all indoor, tier 2 mixed-light license types of all sizes, and nurseries using indoor or tier 2 mixed-light techniques shall ensure that electrical power used for commercial cannabis activity meets the average electricity greenhouse gas emissions intensity required by their local utility provider pursuant to the California Renewables Portfolio Standard Program, beginning January 1, 2023.

Therefore, the proposed projects would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable or energy efficiency, and no impact would occur.

<b>7. GEOLOGY AND SOILS</b>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>				
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv) Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>7. GEOLOGY AND SOILS</b>				
<b>Would the project:</b>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**DISCUSSION:**

**FAULTING AND GROUND SHAKING**

Monterey County lies within a region of high seismic activity in the form of frequent medium earthquakes with nearby epicenters, as well as infrequent major earthquakes. Earthquakes can cause two types of hazards: primary and secondary. Primary seismic hazards include ground shaking and ground displacement, which in turn can induce secondary hazards. Secondary hazards include ground failure (lurch cracking, lateral spreading, and slope failure), liquefaction, seismically-induced water waves (tsunamis and seiches), and dam failure.

The project sites are located in the seismically active Monterey Bay region. Earthquake faults in the vicinity of the proposed project include: the San Andreas Fault (of the Santa Cruz Mountains), located between 4 and 8 miles to the northeast of the project sites; and the Vergeles Fault (Zayante-Vergeles Fault Zone), located between 2 and 5 miles to the south and east of the project sites.

Alquist-Priolo earthquake fault zones are regulatory zones surrounding the surface traces of active faults in California. The project sites are not located within an Alquist-Priolo earthquake fault zone (Source: 27, 33). Ground rupture or cracking outside a mapped fault trace that is caused from seismic shaking, settlement, or other motion triggered by earthquakes is common.

The Seismic Hazards Mapping Act (SHMA) addressed non-surface fault rupture earthquake hazards, including strong ground shaking, liquefaction, and seismically-induced landslides. The California Geologic Survey (CGS) is the primary state agency charged with implementing the SHMA, and is directed to provide local governments with seismic hazard zone maps that identify areas susceptible to amplified shaking, liquefaction, earthquake-induced landslides, and other ground failures. A seismic hazard zone describes an area with a particular level of hazard due to earthquakes. Typically, a high seismic hazard zone is nearest a seismic zone where there are more earthquakes, and a lower seismic hazard zone is farther away from a seismic zone. The project sites are mapped in following seismic hazard zones (Source: 33):

- Coasta Bella and Gold Coast Gardens – Seismic Hazard Zone VI;
- Coastal Farms and 214 Lewis Road – Seismic Hazard Zone IV; and
- 12/12 Genetics – Seismic Hazard Zone II.

**LIQUEFACTION, LATERAL SPREADING, AND SEISMIC INDUCED SETTLEMENT**

The term liquefaction refers to the liquefied condition and subsequent softening that can occur in soils when they are subject to cyclic strains, such as those generated during a seismic event.

Studies of area where liquefaction has occurred have led to the conclusions that saturated soil conditions, low soil density, grain sizes within a certain range, and a sufficiently strong earthquake, in combination, create a potential for liquefaction. The effects of liquefaction can include ground settlement, lateral soil spreading, and localized loss of foundation support. The project sites are mapped in zones of varying liquefaction potential (Source: 33):

- Coasta Bella and Gold Coast Gardens – low potential where cannabis operations would occur and high potential in the norther portions of the sites near the Pajaro River;
- Coastal Farms – moderate potential;
- 214 Lewis Road – high potential; and
- 12/12 Genetics – low potential.

### SLOPE STABILITY AND LANDSLIDES

The five project sites are relatively flat. According to the Landslide Identification Map, the five project sites are deemed to have a low susceptibility to landslides (Source: 31<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=80aadc38518a45889751e97546ca5c53>).

### EROSION

Erosion can be defined as the wearing away of the land surface by flowing water, waves, or wind, or by such processes as mass wasting and corrosion. Erosion not only leads to soil loss by also results in degraded water quality, unwanted soil deposition leading to property damage, and increased danger from flooding. Soils can sometimes be rated as to their erosion hazard potential. (Source: 27). The five project sites are mapped as having a low potential for erosion (Source: 31).

### EXPANSIVE SOILS

Expansive soils tend to swell with increases in soil moisture and shrink as the soil moisture decreases. The volume changes that the soils undergo in this cyclical pattern can stress and damage slabs and foundations if precautionary measures are not incorporated into the construction procedure. Soils with moderate or high expansion potential are susceptible to shrinking and swelling due to fluctuations in moisture content and are a common cause of foundation deterioration, pavement damage, cracking of concrete slabs, and shifting of underground utilities.

The project sites are mapped in zones of varying potential for expansive soils (Source: 33):

- Coasta Bella, Gold Coast Gardens – high potential
- Coastal Farms and 214 Lewis – moderate to high
- 12/12 Genetics-minor to moderate

### UNSTABLE GEOLOGIC UNITS

Unstable geologic units are those that lack the integrity to support human-made improvements such as buildings and roadways. This may be due to the lack of strength, lack of compaction or low density, or unsuitability of material for a particular foundation. Unstable geologic units may

also be initially stable and lost stability due to improper drainage or buildup of pore pressure that causes a reduction in strength. Major problems include settlement, lurch cracking, differential settlement, and expansion. Instability is often due to a range of factors that may be difficult to quantify but can be collectively attributed to unstable native materials and unstable fill soils. Unstable geologic units include soft marshy soils that are prone to subsidence (see below), sandy soils with shallow groundwater prone to liquefaction, and friable or poorly indurated rock such as the Monterey Formation or alluvium that can fail on slopes.

The following lists the soils that occur at each project site (county GIS and web soil survey):

- Coasta Bella and Gold Coast Gardens – Pacheco clay loam (Pa): slopes 0 to 2 percent, poorly drained, runoff class very low, depth to water table 36-60 inches;
- Coastal Farms – Xerorthents (Xd), dissected: 50 to 60 percent slopes, well drained, runoff class very high, depth to water table more than 80 inches;
- 214 Lewis Rd: Clear Lake clay (Cg): sandy substratum, 0 to 1 percent slopes; poorly drained, runoff class high, depth to water table 36-60 inches; and
- 12/12 Genetics – Elkhorn fine sandy loam (EdB): 2 to 5 percent slopes, well drained, runoff class low, depth to water table more than 80 inches.

## LAND SUBSIDENCE

Land subsidence is a gradual settling or sudden sinking of the Earth's surface owing to subsurface movement of earth materials, such as groundwater, oil, or natural gas. The principal causes of land subsidence in the region are groundwater mining, which can cause collapse of aquifer sediments and compaction, drainage of organic soils, underground mining, hydrocompaction, and sinkholes. There is little documentation of widespread subsidence in the County (Source: 27). Areas susceptible to subsidence are typically composed of soils with high silt or clay content.

Aquifer-system compaction (groundwater mining) results from pumping groundwater out of the aquifer faster than it is able to recover through recharge. This has caused considerable subsidence – as much as 15 to 25 feet in some parts of the Santa Clara and San Joaquin Valleys. It is less common in the Salinas Valley, and not documented in the Pajaro Valley (Source: 27).

The project sites overlie the Corralitos-Pajaro Valley Groundwater Basin (Basin), 3-002.01, and would receive water supply from groundwater wells within this basin (Source: 11). The Basin is identified by Department of Water Resources (DWR) as critically overdrafted, as defined by the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). The SGMA requires that a Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) develop and implement a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) for each critically overdrafted basin in the state by January 31, 2020. This groundwater basin is located within the management jurisdiction area of the Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency (PV Water), which became the GSA for the Basin in 2015, as required by the SGMA (Source: 46, 47). PV Water submitted the Basin Management Plan (BMP Update) and other associated documents to the DWR as an Alternative to a GSP, required under the SGMA, in December 2016. DWR approved PV Water's Alternative to the GSP in July 2019. The purpose of the BMP Update is to outline how PV Water will achieve groundwater sustainability in the Basin in 20 years, and maintain sustainability for an additional 30 years (Source: 45). Implementation of the BMP



Update would facilitate sustainability of groundwater extractions in aquifers below the project sites by 2044, which would reduce the potential for subsidence due to groundwater withdrawal. Under SGMA and under the guidance of the Ad Hoc Sustainable Groundwater Committee, PV Water prepared a 5-year update to its GSP Alternative, titled GSU22 (Source: 45). PV Water's GSP Alternative primarily consists of the BMP Update and GSU22 but continues to be supplemented as needed.

## PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Paleontology is the study of plant and animal fossils. Generally, paleontological resources are more than 10,000 years old. Significant paleontological resources are fossils or assemblages of fossils that are unique, unusual, rare, uncommon, and diagnostically or stratigraphically important – and those that add to an existing body of knowledge in specific areas, stratigraphically, taxonomically, or regionally. Most of the fossils found in Monterey County are of marine life forms and form a record of the region's geological history of advancing and retreating sea levels. Most of the County's fossils are micro-organisms such as foraminifera or diatoms, or assemblages of mollusks and barnacles most commonly found in sedimentary rocks ranging from Cretaceous age (138 to 96 million years old) to Pleistocene age (1.6 million to 11 thousand years old). A review of nearly 700 known fossil localities was conducted by paleontologists in 2001, and 12 fossil sites were identified as having outstanding scientific value (Source: 27). None of these sites are located within or in the vicinity of the proposed project sites.

## **CONCLUSIONS:**

### **7(ai) and (a ii). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

Fault rupture is a seismic hazard that affects structures sites above an active fault. The project sites are not located within a State of California Earthquake Fault Hazard Zone in accordance with the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone Act of 1972, and no known active faults cross the sites (Source: 27, 33). Therefore, the potential for surface fault rupture is low.

The largest fault line closest to the project sites is the San Andreas Fault, located between 4 and 8 miles of the project sites, and is capable of producing a magnitude event of 8.1, which would be expected to cause strong ground shaking at each of the project sites. The nearest fault to the project sites is the Vergeles Fault, located two to five miles from the project sites. As a result, earthquakes along these faults are expected to result in moderate to high ground shaking at the project sites (Source: 31, 33).

On the basis of current technology, it is reasonable to assume that the proposed projects would be subject to at least one moderate to severe earthquake during the 50-year period following construction. Potential seismic hazards include surface ground rupture, strong seismic shaking and potential liquefaction, and dynamic settlement. Since fault traces do not cross the property, the potential for surface ground rupture at the site is low. However, due to the proximity of the referenced nearby faults, there is potential for strong seismic shaking at the site during the existing and proposed structures' design life. The proposed improvements to existing structures and construction of new structures would improve seismic safety. The proposed projects would not result in the construction of habitable structures that would be occupied by people. The proposed

projects would not expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death resulting from fault rupture or ground shaking. Therefore, impacts related to fault rupture and ground shaking would be less than significant.

**7(aiii). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

The term liquefaction refers to the liquefied condition and subsequent softening that can occur in soils when they are subject to cyclic strains, such as those generated during a seismic event. The potential for liquefaction varies among the project sites. Coasta Bella, Gold Coast Gardens, and 12/12 Genetics have a low liquefaction potential. Coastal Farms and 214 Lewis Road have a moderate and high potential for liquefaction, respectively. The proposed Coastal Farms and 214 Lewis Road projects do not include habitable structures or facilities that would be occupied by people. For these reasons, the proposed projects would not expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death resulting from seismic ground failure, including liquefaction. Therefore, impacts related to seismic ground failure, including liquefaction, would be less than significant.

**7(aiv). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

The five project sites are relatively flat. According to the Landslide Identification Map, the five project sites are deemed to have a low susceptibility to landslides. (Source: 31, 33). Therefore, impacts related to landslides would be less than significant.

**7(b). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

The five project sites project sites are mapped as having a low potential for erosion and a relatively flat. The project sites are currently in agricultural use and, historically, the sites have been used for agricultural use.

The proposed Coasta Bella project would involve ground-disturbance, including grading and excavation activities for the construction of the three new structures. The site was previously graded for historic operations and, therefore, no natural topsoil horizon is present at the site. The proposed facilities would involve the construction of a 16,128-sf greenhouse, 25,000-sf distribution/manufacturing/processing facility, and 4,500-sf processing facility, totaling approximately 45,628 sf (approximately 1.05 acres). The proposed project would disturb more than one acre of soil, and, thus, would be required to obtain coverage under the RWQCB NPDES General Storm Water Permit. The permit would require a SWPPP, which contains BMPs for construction and post construction runoff. BMPs that are typically specified within the SWPPP may include, but would not be limited to the following:

- The use of sandbags, straw bales, and temporary de-silting basins during project grading and construction during the rainy season to prevent discharge of sediment-laden runoff into storm water facilities.
- Revegetation as soon as practicable after completion of grading to reduce sediment transport during storms.
- Installation of straw bales, wattles, or silt fencing at the base of bare slopes before the onset of the rainy season (October 15th through April 15th).
- Installation of straw bales, wattles, or silt fencing at the project perimeter and in front of storm drains before the onset of the rainy season (October 15th through April 15th).

In addition, County COA would require the submittal of an erosion control plan, submittal of a grading plan, and review and certification of a grading plan and a stormwater control plan by a licensed practitioner, consistent with the regulations contained in MCC Chapters 16.08 and 16.12,

The proposed improvements at the remaining four project sites would require minimal ground-disturbance. These sites were also previously graded for historic operations and, therefore, no natural topsoil horizon is present at the sites. These proposed projects do not involve the construction of new structures and facilities that would require earthwork that would result in substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil.

Operations at each of the project sites would involve movement of soil for use in above-ground planters within greenhouses. Cannabis cultivation within the greenhouses would be planted individually above-ground and watered using drip irrigation from on-site well water.

For these reasons, the proposed projects would not result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil. Impacts related to erosion or loss of topsoil would be less than significant.

**7(c). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

Implementation of the Basin Management Plan Update would facilitate sustainability of groundwater extractions in aquifers below the project sites by 2044, which would reduce the potential for subsidence due to groundwater withdrawal. The proposed projects are required to comply with PV Water's GSP Alternative, including any future restrictions on groundwater pumping rates that may be imposed by the GSA. As discussed in Section 10, Hydrology and Water Quality, the water demand for the proposed projects would be lower than prior cut flower operation demand. Therefore, pumping rates would be lower in the near term and would contribute toward meeting sustainable conditions within PV Water's GSP Alternative by 2044. As a result, the potential for subsidence resulting from the proposed projects to adversely impact people or structures would be less than significant.

**7(d). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

The project sites are mapped in zones of varying potential for expansive soils, ranging from minor to high potential. With the exception of the Coasta Bella project, no new structures are proposed and, therefore, would not create substantial risks to life or property as a result of the presence of expansive soils.

Soils with moderate or high expansion, such as those present at the Coasta Bella site, potential are undesirable for use as engineered fill or subgrade directly underneath foundations or pavement, and must be replaced with non-expansive engineered fill or require treatment to mitigate their expansion potential. As discussed in 7(b), County COA would require the submittal of a grading plan and review and certification of a grading plan by a licensed practitioner, consistent with the regulations contained in MCC Chapters 16.08. In addition, MCC Chapter 16.08.110 requires grading plans to be submitted along with supporting data consisting of a soil engineering report and an engineering geology report, unless waived by the County Building Official because information is available showing such data is not needed. The soil engineering report is required to include data regarding the nature, distribution, and strength of existing soils, conclusions and recommendations for grading procedures and design criteria for corrective measures when necessary, and opinions and recommendations covering adequately of the site to be developed by

the proposed grading. The engineering geology report is required to provide an adequate description of the geology of the site, conclusions and recommendations regarding the effect of geologic conditions on the proposed development, and opinions and recommendations covering the adequacy of the site to be developed by the proposed grading. Recommendations in these reports and approved by the Building Official will be incorporated in the grading plans and specifications. With required compliance with grading permit requirements, the proposed new structures at the Coasta Bella site would not create substantial risks to life or property as a result of the presence of expansive soils. Impacts would be less than significant.

**7(e). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

The project sites are currently developed and existing septic systems are in operation. All proposed improvements would be required to comply with the County On-Site Wastewater Treatment Systems (OWTS) regulation as described in MCC 15.20, Sewage Disposal, as supplemented by the County’s Local Agency Management Program (LAMP) for OTWS (please refer to Section 19, Utilities and Service Systems). With required compliance with state and county regulations related to septic systems, impacts would be less than significant.

**7(f). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

The County General Plan EIR describes 12 fossil sites that were identified as having outstanding scientific value (Source: 27). None of these sites are located within or in the vicinity of the proposed project sites. In addition, the project sites are currently developed, and the proposed improvements and construction would occur in previously disturbed areas and would not affect depths greater than already affected by previous development activities. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

<b>8. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS</b>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**DISCUSSION:**

Various gases in the earth’s atmosphere, classified as atmospheric greenhouse gases (GHGs), play a critical role in determining the earth’s surface temperature. Solar radiation enters the atmosphere from space and a portion of the radiation is absorbed by the earth’s surface. The earth emits this radiation back toward space, but the properties of the radiation change from high-frequency solar radiation to lower-frequency infrared radiation. GHGs, which are transparent to solar radiation, are effective in absorbing infrared radiation. As a result, the radiation that otherwise would have escaped back into space is retained, resulting in a warming of the atmosphere known as the

greenhouse effect. Among the prominent GHGs contributing to the greenhouse effect, or climate change, are carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), O<sub>3</sub>, water vapor, nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), and chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs). Human-caused emissions of these GHGs in excess of natural ambient concentrations are responsible for enhancing the greenhouse effect. In California, the transportation sector is the largest emitter of GHGs.

Different types of GHGs have varying global warming potentials (GWPs), which is the potential of a gas or aerosol to trap heat in the atmosphere over a specified time, generally 100 years. Because GHGs absorb different amounts of heat, a common reference gas (CO<sub>2</sub>) is used to relate the amount of heat absorbed to the amount of the gas emissions, referred to as the “carbon dioxide equivalent” (CO<sub>2</sub>e), and is the amount of a GHG emitted multiplied by its GWP. CO<sub>2</sub> has a 100-year GWP of one. By contrast, CH<sub>4</sub> has a GWP of 25, meaning its global warming effect is 25 times greater than carbon dioxide on a molecule per molecule basis (Source: 38).

According to the CalEPA’s 2010 Climate Action Team Biennial Report, potential impacts of climate change in California may include loss of snow pack, sea level rise, more extreme heat days per year, more high ozone days, more large forest fires, and more drought years (Source: 17).

An individual project’s GHG emissions are at a micro-scale level relative to global emission and effects to climate change; however, an individual project could result in a cumulatively considerable incremental contribution to a significant cumulative macro-scale impact. As such, impacts related to emissions of GHG are inherently considered cumulative impacts.

## REGULATORY SETTING

### *Assembly Bill 32 - California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006*

AB 32 (Health and Safety Code Sections 38500, 38501, 28510, 38530, 38550, 38560, 38561–38565, 38570, 38571, 38574, 38580, 38590, 38592–38599) requires that statewide GHG emissions be reduced to 1990 levels by the year 2020. The gases that are regulated by AB 32 include CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub>, N<sub>2</sub>O, HFCs, PFCs, NF<sub>3</sub>, and SF<sub>6</sub>. The reduction to 1990 levels will be accomplished through an enforceable statewide cap on GHG emissions that were phased in starting in 2012. To effectively implement the cap, AB 32 directs CARB to develop and implement regulations to reduce statewide GHG emissions from stationary sources. AB 32 specifies that regulations adopted in response to AB 1493 should be used to address GHG emissions from vehicles. However, AB 32 also includes language stating that if the AB 1493 regulations cannot be implemented, then CARB should develop new regulations to control vehicle GHG emissions under the authorization of AB 32.

AB 32 requires that CARB adopt a quantified cap on GHG emissions representing 1990 emissions levels and disclose how it arrives at the cap, institute a schedule to meet the emissions cap, and develop tracking, reporting, and enforcement mechanisms to ensure that the state achieves reductions in GHG emissions necessary to meet the cap. AB 32 also includes guidance to institute emissions reductions in an economically efficient manner and conditions to ensure that businesses and consumers are not unfairly affected by the reductions.

### *Climate Change Scoping Plan*

In October 2008, CARB published its *Climate Change Proposed Scoping Plan*, which is the State's plan to achieve GHG reductions in California required by AB 32. This initial Scoping Plan contained the main strategies to be implemented in order to achieve the target emission levels identified in AB 32. The Scoping Plan included CARB-recommended GHG reductions for each emissions sector of the state's GHG inventory. The largest proposed GHG reduction recommendations were associated with improving emissions standards for light-duty vehicles, implementing the Low Carbon Fuel Standard program, implementation of energy efficiency measures in buildings and appliances, and the widespread development of combined heat and power systems, and developing a renewable portfolio standard for electricity production.

The Scoping Plan states that land use planning and urban growth decisions will play important roles in the state's GHG reductions because local governments have primary authority to plan, zone, approve, and permit how land is developed to accommodate population growth and the changing needs of their jurisdictions. CARB further acknowledges that decisions on how land is used will have large impacts on the GHG emissions that will result from the transportation, housing, industry, forestry, water, agriculture, electricity, and natural gas emissions sectors. With regard to land use planning, the Scoping Plan expects approximately 5.0 MMT CO<sub>2e</sub> will be achieved associated with implementation of Senate Bill 375, which is discussed further below.

The initial Scoping Plan was first approved by CARB on December 11, 2008 and is updated every five years. The first update of the Scoping Plan was approved by the CARB on May 22, 2014, which looked past 2020 to set mid-term goals (2030-2035) on the road to reaching the 2050 goals. The most recent update released by CARB is the *2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan*, which was released in November 2017 (Source: 5). The *2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan* incorporates strategies for achieving the 2030 GHG-reduction target established in SB 32 and EO B-30-15. Many of the GHG reduction measures included in the Scoping Plan (e.g., Low Carbon Fuel Standard, Advanced Clean Car standards, and Cap-and-Trade) have been adopted since approval of the Scoping Plan.

### *Senate Bill 1078 and Governor's Order S-14-08 (California Renewables Portfolio Standards)*

SB 1078 (Public Utilities Code Sections 387, 390.1, 399.25 and Article 16) addresses electricity supply and requires that retail sellers of electricity, including investor-owned utilities and community choice aggregators, provide a minimum 20 percent of their supply from renewable sources by 2017. This SB will affect statewide GHG emissions associated with electricity generation. In 2008, Governor Schwarzenegger signed EO S-14-08, which set the Renewables Portfolio Standard target to 33 percent by 2020. It directed state government agencies and retail sellers of electricity to take all appropriate actions to implement this target. EO S-14-08 was later superseded by EO S-21-09 on September 15, 2009. EO S-21-09 directed the CARB to adopt regulations requiring 33 percent of electricity sold in the State come from renewable energy by 2020. Statute SB X1-2 superseded this EO in 2011, which obligated all California electricity providers, including investor-owned utilities and publicly owned utilities, to obtain at least 33 percent of their energy from renewable electrical generation facilities by 2020.

CARB is required by current law, AB 32 of 2006, to regulate sources of GHGs to meet a state goal of reducing GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 and an 80 percent reduction of 1990 levels by

2050. The CEC and CPUC serve in advisory roles to help CARB develop the regulations to administer the 33 percent by 2020 requirement. CARB is also authorized to increase the target and accelerate and expand the time frame.

#### *Senate Bill 32*

SB 32 was signed by Governor Brown on September 8, 2016. SB 32 effectively extends California's GHG emission-reduction goals from year 2020 to year 2030. This new emission-reduction target of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 is intended to promote further GHG-reductions in support of the State's ultimate goal of reducing GHG emissions by 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. SB 32 also directs the CARB to update the Climate Change Scoping Plan to address this interim 2030 emission-reduction target.

#### *Senate Bill 375*

SB 375 requires Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) to adopt a sustainable communities strategy (SCS) or alternative planning strategy (APS) that will address land use allocation in that MPOs regional transportation plan. CARB, in consultation with MPOs, establishes regional reduction targets for GHGs emitted by passenger cars and light trucks for the years 2020 and 2035. These reduction targets will be updated every eight years but can be updated every four years if advancements in emissions technologies affect the reduction strategies to achieve the targets. CARB is also charged with reviewing each MPO's SCS or APS for consistency with its assigned targets. If MPOs do not meet the GHG reduction targets, funding for transportation projects may be withheld. AMBAG adopted the 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (AMBAG MTP/SCS) in June 2018, which meets the requirements of SB 375.

#### *California Building Code*

The CBC contains standards that regulate the method of use, properties, performance, or types of materials used in the construction, alteration, improvement, repair, or rehabilitation of a building or other improvement to real property. The CBC is adopted every three years by the BSC. In the interim, the BSC also adopts annual updates to make necessary mid-term corrections. The CBC standards apply statewide; however, a local jurisdiction may amend a CBC standard if it makes a finding that the amendment is reasonably necessary due to local climatic, geological, or topographical conditions.

#### *Green Building Standards*

In essence, green buildings standards are indistinguishable from any other building standards. Both standards are contained in the CBC and regulate the construction of new buildings and improvements. The only practical distinction between the two is that whereas the focus of traditional building standards has been protecting public health and safety, the focus of green building standards is to improve environmental performance.

AB 32, which mandates the reduction of GHG emissions in California to 1990 levels by 2020, increased the urgency around the adoption of green building standards. In its scoping plan for the implementation of AB 32, CARB identified energy use as the second largest contributor to California's GHG emissions, constituting roughly 25 percent of all such emissions. In recommending a green building strategy as one element of the scoping plan, CARB estimated that

green building standards would reduce GHG emissions by approximately 26 MMT of CO<sub>2e</sub> by 2020. Most recently, the CEC adopted new building energy efficiency standards that amends the building code to require improvements in building insulation, use of energy-efficient lighting, and the incorporation of renewable energy technology (e.g., solar photovoltaic systems) for newly constructed residential dwellings. These standards are anticipated to reduce energy usage by approximately 50 percent for residential buildings and 30 percent for nonresidential buildings (Source: 14).

### *Senate Bill 97*

SB 97 was enacted in 2007. SB 97 required the Office of Planning and Research to develop, and the California Natural Resources Agency to adopt, amendments to the CEQA Guidelines addressing the analysis and mitigation of GHG emissions. Those CEQA Guidelines amendments clarified several points, including the following:

- Lead agencies must analyze the GHG emissions of proposed projects and must reach a conclusion regarding the significance of those emissions.
- When a project’s GHG emissions may be significant, lead agencies must consider a range of potential mitigation measures to reduce those emissions.
- Lead agencies must analyze potentially significant impacts associated with placing projects in hazardous locations, including locations potentially affected by climate change.
- Lead agencies may significantly streamline the analysis of GHGs on a project level by using a programmatic GHG emissions reduction plan meeting certain criteria.
- CEQA mandates analysis of a proposed project’s potential energy use (including transportation-related energy), sources of energy supply and ways to reduce energy demand, including through the use of efficient transportation alternatives.

As part of the administrative rulemaking process, the California Natural Resources Agency developed a Final Statement of Reasons explaining the legal and factual bases, intent, and purpose of the CEQA Guidelines amendments. The amendments to the CEQA Guidelines implementing SB 97 became effective on March 18, 2010.

## **CONCLUSIONS:**

### **8(a). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

## METHODOLOGY

As described in Section 3, Air Quality, CalEEMod was used to estimate GHG emissions from existing conditions and from the proposed projects.

## IMPACT ANALYSIS

Neither the state, MBARD, or the County have adopted GHG emissions thresholds. The 2017 Scoping Plan does not provide specific guidance to local jurisdictions for determining the amount of emission reductions to be achieved from land use plans or projects. Instead it recommends local governments adopt policies and locally-approved quantitative thresholds consistent with a statewide per capita goal of six MT CO<sub>2e</sub> by 2030 and two MT CO<sub>2e</sub> by 2050. While the County



does have a GHG emissions reduction plan for reductions out to 2020, it does not identify a locally-appropriate quantitative threshold. In addition, MBARD has not provided quantitative thresholds to evaluate GHG impacts associated with land use projects.

However, it is important to note that other air districts within the State of California have adopted recommended CEQA significance thresholds for GHG emissions. For instance, on March 28, 2012, the San Luis Obispo Air Pollution Control District (SLOAPCD) Board approved thresholds of significance for the evaluation of project-related increases of GHG emissions; SLOAPCD is the air district south of NCCAB. The SLOAPCD's significance thresholds include both qualitative and quantitative threshold options, which include a bright-line threshold of 1,150 MT CO<sub>2e</sub>/year. The GHG significance thresholds are based on AB 32 GHG emission reduction goals, which take into consideration the emission reduction strategies outlined in ARB's Scoping Plan. Development projects located within these jurisdictions that would exceed these thresholds would be considered to have a potentially significant impact on the environment which could conflict with applicable GHG-reduction plans, policies and regulations. Projects with GHG emissions that do not exceed the applicable threshold would be considered to have a less-than-significant impact on the environment and would not be anticipated to conflict with AB 32 GHG emission-reduction goals.

As noted above, MBARD has not yet adopted recommended GHG significance thresholds applicable to development projects. In the interim, the MBARD recommends use of other thresholds, such as those adopted by the SLOAPCD. For purposes of this analysis, project-generated emissions in excess of 1,150 MT CO<sub>2e</sub>/year would be considered to have a potentially significant impact.

Implementation of the proposed projects would contribute GHG emissions that are associated with global climate change. GHG emissions attributable to future development would be primarily associated with increases of CO<sub>2</sub> and, to a lesser extent, other GHG pollutants, such as CH<sub>4</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O. Greenhouse gas emissions would be generated by the proposed projects from sources that include vehicle trips, on-site electricity consumption, on-site natural gas combustion, water use (electricity consumption from pumping and treatment), wastewater generation (electricity consumption from pumping and treatment), and solid waste disposal (decomposition of solid waste disposed in a landfill).

## CONSTRUCTION

One of the five proposed projects, Coasta Bella, would involve the construction of a new greenhouse and two buildings, totaling approximately 46,000 sf. Construction GHG emissions are a one-time release and, therefore, are not typically expected to generate a significant contribution to global climate change. SLOAPCD has not adopted a threshold of significance for construction-related GHG emissions. The construction of the proposed Coasta Bella project would involve minimal grading due to the flat topography of the site and would occur over a short timeframe (approximately eight months). Therefore, the proposed Coasta Bella project would not be expected to result in a significant impact related to GHG emissions.

The proposed Coasta Bella project and other ~~four~~<sup>six</sup> proposed projects would involve minor greenhouse retrofit work and on-site improvements, as discussed in Section II, Description of the

Proposed Projects. These proposed improvements would not require any demolition or construction of new facilities, and would not be anticipated to require heavy construction equipment or activities such as grading. The proposed improvements would be similar to existing maintenance and upkeep of the previous uses on site, and, therefore, these emissions are accounted for in the region. In addition, the duration of the proposed activities would be temporary and intermittent. Therefore, GHG emissions from these activities would be similar to existing emissions and part of typical maintenance and upkeep of an agricultural facility and would be less than significant.

## OPERATION

Operational or long-term emissions would occur over the projects' lifetimes. GHG emissions would result from direct emissions such as project-generated vehicular traffic, on-site combustion of natural gas, and operation of any landscaping equipment. Operational GHG emissions would also result from indirect sources, such as off-site generation of electrical power over the life of the project, the energy required to convey water to, and wastewater from the project sites, the emissions associated with solid waste generated from the project sites, and any fugitive refrigerants from air conditioning or refrigerators.

For operational emissions, although four of the five sites have already switched to cannabis operations, in order to determine the full impact of the proposed projects, all five sites were previously used for cut flower operations, as discussed in Section II, Description of the Proposed Projects. **Table 9** summarizes the total GHG emissions associated with the existing cut flower uses and the proposed cannabis operation, including the net change in GHG emissions from cannabis operations. **Table 9** shows that the proposed cannabis uses would have similar operational GHG emissions compared to the existing uses and the net increase would not exceed the SLOAPCD's threshold. The greatest increase in emissions is due to the higher vehicle trips associated with cannabis cultivation. Area emissions would remain negligible under both existing and proposed scenarios. Energy GHG emissions would be higher under proposed cannabis operations because the proposed new buildings at the Coasta Bella site use more energy than existing operations (i.e., greenhouses associated with cut flowers). Waste GHG emissions would be higher under proposed cannabis operations due to the increase in product waste associated with cannabis cultivation. Water GHG emissions would be higher under existing operations due to the higher water demand associated with cut flower operations.

As described above, the proposed projects' contribution to GHG emissions impacts and climate change would be considered significant if the proposed projects generated emissions in excess of 1,150 MT CO<sub>2</sub>e/year compared to existing operations. As shown in **Table 9**, the proposed projects would not increase emissions above the threshold. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Table 9. Operational GHG Emissions	
Category	MT CO <sub>2</sub> e <sup>1</sup>
<i>Existing Project Emissions</i>	
Area Source	0.0338
Energy	225.59
Mobile	1,848.95
Waste	36.74
Water and Wastewater	136.47
<b>Total Project</b>	<b>2,247.78</b>
<i>Proposed Projects Emissions</i>	
Area Source	0.0331
Energy	405.53
Mobile	2,023.44
Waste	287.25
Water and Wastewater	86.98
<b>Total Project</b>	<b>2,803.23</b>
<b>Net Change Total</b>	<b>555.45</b>
<b>Threshold</b>	<b>1,150</b>
<b>Threshold Exceeded?</b>	<b>No</b>
1. Emissions were calculated using CalEEMod version 2016.3.2.	

**8(b). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

The regional GHG reduction policies and regulations applicable to the proposed projects are those found in the Monterey County General Plan and Municipal Climate Action Plan, SB 32, and the 2017 Scoping Plan, which respectively codify the state’s mid-term (2030) GHG target and plan for achieving it, and AMBAG’s 2040 MTP/SCS. In addition, DCC’s regulations related to power sources and emergency generator emissions would also be applicable to the proposed projects.

Policies S-2 and S-3 of the MCAP would be implemented through increased vehicle fuel efficiency through the vehicles and through the fuel that vehicles use. Implementation of the proposed projects would not interfere with these increased efficiencies, and vehicle use related to the proposed projects would benefit from the lowered GHG emissions from these measures.

The 2017 Scoping Plan outlines a pathway to achieving the reduction targets set under SB 32, which is considered an interim target toward meeting the state’s long-term 2045 goal established by EO-B-55-18. A project would impede “substantial progress” toward meeting the SB 32 and EO-B-55-18 targets if GHG emissions exceeded 1,150 MT CO<sub>2</sub>e/year. As discussed under 7(b),

the projects' GHG emissions would not exceed this threshold. As a result, the proposed projects would not conflict with the reduction targets of the 2017 Scoping Plan and EO-B-55-18.

AMBAG's 2040 MTP/SCS was created to outline a growth strategy to meet GHG emission reduction targets to be achieved from passenger vehicles by 2020 and 2035 through a SCS land use development pattern that complements the proposed transportation network. While the proposed project sites would be located outside of areas that would have transit stops or bicycle lanes nearby, methods to reduce vehicle trips, and therefore GHG emissions, such as carpooling, can be encouraged by the operations or organized by the employees. In addition, the proposed projects would not inhibit the measures identified in the 2040 MTP/SCS to meet AMBAG's required targets from being implemented. Therefore, the proposed projects would not conflict with the AMBAG 2040 MTP/SCS.

The proposed projects would be requirement to implement DCC regulations for cannabis cultivation related to power sources and emergency generator emissions, as discussed in Section 3, Air Quality, and Section 6, Energy.

As a result, the proposed projects would not conflict with applicable state plans, policies, or regulations intended to reduce GHG emissions, and this impact would be less than significant.

<b>9. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS</b>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

<b>9. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS</b>		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>					
f)	Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? (Source: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g)	Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**DISCUSSION/CONCLUSIONS:**

**9(a-b). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

New construction activities associated with the proposed Coasta Bella project and the minor greenhouse retrofit and other site improvements associated with the other ~~four~~<sup>six</sup> projects would require the temporary use of hazardous substances, such as fuel for construction equipment, oil, solvents, or paints. No demolition work is anticipated. Removal and disposal of hazardous materials from the project site during construction must be conducted by an appropriately licensed contractor. Any handling, transporting, use, or disposal would comply with applicable laws, regulations, policies, and programs set forth by various federal, state, and local agencies. Required compliance with applicable hazardous material laws and regulations would ensure that construction-related hazardous material use would not result in significant impacts. These impacts also would be temporary in nature and would be less than significant.

The operation of the proposed cannabis facilities may require the use and storage of nominal amounts of potentially hazardous materials, such as fuel for power equipment and emergency generators, and pesticides. Additionally, mixed-light cultivation would use high-powered lights, which may contain hazardous components that could enter the environment through disposal. F-zoned sites, which apply to all of the project site, only allow non-volatile manufacturing, which could include the use of ethanol, CO<sub>2</sub>, water, ice, and mechanical methods. Cannabis plants and byproduct are organic waste and not hazardous, as defined in PRC Section 42649.8(c). The proposed projects would handle cannabis waste in accordance with CCR Section 17223, Waste Management. In accordance with state disposal requirements, the proposed projects would compost some organic waste on-site and any remaining waste would be hauled to a facility that recycles organic material. In transport of any cannabis product, the track and trace system would be used so as to account for all cannabis product leaving the site.

There will be no hazardous byproduct from hazardous materials during the cultivation and manufacturing process, and, therefore, no hazardous waste would be produced. In the case that hazardous waste is produced, it will be transported to a hazardous waste facility, including unused fertilizers and pesticides. Hazardous materials stored at each project site would include synthetic and natural fertilizers, pesticides, CO<sub>2</sub>, ethanol, and household cleaning agents. Coastal Farms is proposing to obtain a 20-foot shipping container to be used to store hazardous materials, which

would be clearly marked with the universal symbol for hazardous materials. Pesticide and agricultural chemical storage locations are shown on the site plans.

If not already registered and if required, each project site will be registered with the County Environmental Health Bureau (EHB) Hazardous Materials Management Services. Cannabis Management Service will work with the applicants to register each location as needed in the California Environmental Reporting System (CERS) database to meet Hazardous Materials Business Plan Electronic Reporting Requirements. In addition, facilities that generate hazardous waste shall register electronically for an EPA ID number through the Electronic Verification Questionnaire process with the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) and shall meet all annual reporting requirements for storage, transportation, and disposal of hazardous waste.

The proposed projects would be required to comply with existing federal, state, and local laws regulating the transport, use, and disposal of any hazardous materials. Hazardous materials would be stored properly, in accordance with BMPs and applicable regulations. Runoff controls would be implemented to prevent water quality impacts, and a spill plan would be developed to address any accidental spills. DCC regulations 15011(a)(12), 16304(a)(5), 16307, 16309, and 16310 require the preparation of a pest management plan and outline pesticide use requirements. Additionally, the transportation of hazardous materials is subject to the Hazardous Material Transportation Act of 1975, which provides procedures and policies, material designations, packaging requirements, and operational rules for the transportation of hazardous materials. The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act also established hazardous waste disposal requirements (40 CFR parts 260 through 273). Any removal of building materials that may contain asbestos must be conducted in compliance with MBARD Tule 424 and U.S. EPA asbestos regulations.

With adherence to existing hazardous materials regulations and laws, the proposed projects would not create a significant hazard to the public through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials, or through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment. Impacts would be less than significant.

**9(c). Conclusion: No Impact.**

No schools are located within  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile of any of the project sites. The nearest school is Pajaro Middle School, approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile from the Gold Coast Gardens site. Therefore, no impact would occur.

**9(d). Conclusion: No Impact.**

In accordance with DCC regulation 15011(a)(4), the List of Hazardous Waste and Substances Sites from the DTSC Envirostor Database and List of Leaking Underground Storage Tank Sites from the State Water Board's GeoTracker database were reviewed for potential hazardous materials sites in the project area (Source: 10, 50). The project sites are not identified in these databases as hazardous materials sites. Therefore, no impacts would occur.

**9(e). Conclusion: No Impact.**

The nearest airport is the Watsonville Municipal Airport, located over three miles from the Gold Coast Gardens site. None of the project sites are located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan. Therefore, the proposed projects would not result in a safety hazards or

expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels. No impact would occur.

**9(f). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

According to Policy S-5.14 of the General Plan, all public thoroughfares, private roads, and deeded emergency accesses shall be considered potential evacuation routes. Table S-1 of the General Plan’s Safety Element identifies San Juan Road (G11) as a “Pre-designated Designated Emergency Evacuation Route” and may be employed during tactical situations at the discretion of the Monterey County Sheriff and/or the Incident Commander. The proposed Coasta Bella and Gold Coast Gardens projects are located on San Juan Road. None of the other project sites are located on Pre-Designated Emergency Evacuation Routes, although they are located in the vicinity.

The implementation of the proposed projects would not result in modifications to San Juan Road or any other roadways, and no population growth would occur as part of the proposed projects as no new residences are proposed. Therefore, the proposed cannabis operations would not interfere with emergency response or emergency evacuation plans. Each of the project sites would comply with the MCC and Fire District standards for emergency response vehicles. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

**9(g). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

All of the proposed projects are located on existing agricultural land within unincorporated Monterey County. According to the CAL FIRE Fire Hazard Severity Zone map, one of the proposed project sites is located within a State Responsibility Area (SRA): Coastal Gardens, which is located within a Moderate SRA. The other four project sites are not located within SRAs. As discussed in Section IV, Public Services, the site is adequately served by the North County Fire Protection District and CAL FIRE. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

<b>10. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY</b>		Less Than Significant			
<b>Would the project:</b>		Potentially Significant Impact	With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a)	Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b)	Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c)	Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	i. result in the substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>10. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY</b>		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>					
ii.	substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii.	create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv.	Impede or direct flood flows?				
d)	In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e)	Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**DISCUSSION:**

SURFACE WATER

The Coasta Bella, Gold Coast Gardens, and Coastal Farms project sites are located in an area of Monterey County that is part of the Pajaro River Valley, which contains a mix of small agricultural parcels and rural residential properties. The Coasta Bella and Gold Coast Gardens sites are located adjacent to the Pajaro River levee; however, there are no proposed improvements that would affect the bed, bank, or channel of the levee (**Figures 3 and 5**). There is also an agricultural drainage ditch located adjacent to the Coastal Farms operations.

Tsunamis are ocean waves caused by large earthquakes and landslides that occur near or under the ocean (Source: 27). When tsunamis approach shore, they behave like a very fast-moving tide that extends far inland. Seiches are standing waves set up on rivers, reservoirs, ponds, and lakes when seismic waves from an earthquake pass through the area. Effects of seiches are similar to those of a tsunami (Source: 27). The project sites are not located in close proximity to the coast or near a large inland body of water.<sup>8</sup> None of the project sites are located in a tsunami inundation area (Source: 31).

GROUNDWATER

The project sites overlie the Corralitos-Pajaro Valley Groundwater Basin (Basin), 3-002.01, and would receive water supply from groundwater wells within this basin (Source: 11). The environmental setting with respect to groundwater resources is defined by the extent of the Basin. This groundwater basin is located within the management jurisdiction area of the Pajaro Valley

<sup>8</sup> While the 12/12 Genetics site is located within the Coastal Zone, it is located over 6 miles from the Pacific Ocean.



Water Management Agency (PV Water), which became the GSA for the Basin in 2015, as required by the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) (Source: 46, 47).

The Basin is identified by the DWR as critically overdrafted. As defined by the SGMA 2019 Update to the Basin Boundaries, “a basin is subject to critical overdraft when continuation of present water management practices would probably result in significant adverse overdraft-related environmental, social, or economic impacts” (Source: 12). In response to the DWR’s designation of critical overdraft and in compliance with the SGMA, the PV Water developed the BMP Update, dated February 2014 (Source: 45). PV Water submitted the BMP Update and other associated documents to the DWR as an Alternative to a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP), required under the SGMA, in December 2016. DWR approved PV Water’s Alternative in July 2019. Under SGMA and under the guidance of the Ad Hoc Sustainable Groundwater Committee, PV Water prepared a 5-year update to its GSP Alternative, titled GSU22 (Source: 45). PV Water’s GSP Alternative primarily consists of the BMP Update and GSU22 but continues to be supplemented as needed.

In addition to overdraft, the Basin is also affected by seawater intrusion, which occurs when over-pumping in a groundwater basin alters the pressure differential such that seawater flows into the aquifer, resulting in water quality degradation. In 2010, the County adopted Ordinance 5302, which prohibits approval of new groundwater wells in areas affected by seawater intrusion, including the Basin. This groundwater basin is not adjudicated and is not identified as a recharge area (Source: 33). Implementation of PV Water’s GSP Alternative would facilitate sustainability of groundwater extractions in aquifers below the project sites by 2044, which would reduce the potential for subsidence due to groundwater withdrawal. The proposed projects are required to comply with PV Water’s GSP Alternative, including any future restrictions on groundwater pumping rates that may be imposed by the GSA.

## FLOODPLAIN

According to the Monterey County Floodplain Regulations, Chapter 16.16, the floodplain is defined as “land within the unincorporated areas of the Monterey County subject to one (1) percent chance of flooding in any given year, or once in 100 years (100-year flood), and includes the floodway and floodway fringe.”

The Coasta Bella and Gold Coast Gardens sites are located adjacent to the levee associated with the Pajaro River. Due to the sites’ proximity to the Pajaro River, the sites are located within Special Flood Hazard Area Zones AO and AE, according to FEMA, which would be subject to periodic inundation (**Figure 12**). The Coasta Bella and Gold Coast Gardens project sites are located primarily within Zone AO, with the property along the northern border with river designated as Zone AE, with a base flood elevation of 42 feet. However, no improvements or new development are proposed within the portions of the sites designated as Zone AE. The proposed new structures at the Coasta Bella site would be located within Zone AO and would be elevated above the floodplain at an elevation of approximately 35 feet. The entire 214 Lewis Road site is located within Zone AE, with a base flood elevation between 34 and 37 feet (**Figure 13**). The Coastal Farms and 12/12 Genetics sites are not located within a flood hazard zone.

Figure 12

Figure 13

## CONCLUSIONS:

### 10(a). Conclusion: Less than Significant.

The proposed projects involve the conversion of existing agricultural greenhouses and support structures to commercial cannabis use and construction of new cannabis facilities at one of the sites. The construction of new cannabis facilities would occur in previously developed areas of the Coasta Bella site. The proposed projects would replace existing agricultural operations with new cannabis grow operations, and would permit existing cannabis operations to continue.

As described above, the Coasta Bella and Gold Coast Gardens sites are located adjacent to the Pajaro River levee and the Coastal Farms site is located adjacent to an agricultural drainage ditch; however, there are no proposed improvements that would affect the levee or ditch (**Figures 3 and 5**).

The BMPs for cannabis cultivation listed below would be consistent with the SWRCB Cannabis Cultivation Policy (Source: 49). Project-specific BMPs must be reviewed and approved by the County as part of the licensing process. County Planning staff ensures compliance through review of license applications and site inspections, as needed.

BMPs for Cannabis Cultivation. Consistent with the SWRCB's Cannabis Cultivation Policy, each licensee for cannabis cultivation under the proposed projects is required to implement the following BMPs as part of their proposed project:

- Verification that the licensee has a legal right to the identified water source;
- No obstruction, alteration, damming, or diversion of all or a portion of a natural watercourse without notification and approval from CDFW under the Lake and Streambed Alteration Program;
- Regular inspection of the entire water delivery system for leaks and repair of leaky faucets and connectors as needed;
- Lining of water conveyance ditches/canals to reduce waste and the unreasonable use of water;
- Use of rainwater catchment systems to collect and store stormwater during the rainy season in tanks, bladders, or engineered ponds to reduce the need for water diversions and/or pumping of groundwater during low flow periods (late summer to fall);
- Use of float valves on water storage systems to keep them from overflowing onto the ground;
- Use of drip/irrigation systems;
- Use of mulch to conserve soil moisture in cultivated areas, pots, and bins;
- Where applicable, screen water pump intakes to prevent the entrainment of threatened or endangered aquatic species; and
- Base layout and site development on a qualified expert's recommendations with respect to any listed species protected under California or federal law and avoid any actions that constitutes "take" under the Federal Endangered Species Act or California Endangered Species Act, unless accompanied by an Incidental Take Statement or Incidental Take Permit issued by the appropriate agency.

In addition, the proposed project would be required to comply with DCC regulations 15011(a)(3)(7)(8)(11) and 16304(a)(1) and (2) by providing evidence of enrollment in or waiver of waste discharge requirements within the SWRCB and identification of water sources used for cannabis activities. In addition, if the SWRCB or the CDFW notifies DCC that cannabis cultivation is causing significant adverse effects on the environment in a watershed or other geographic area or not in compliance with any final streambed alteration agreement, DCC shall not issue new licenses or increase the total number of plant identifiers within the watershed or area while the moratorium is in effect. In addition, as discussed in 7(b), because construction associated with the proposed Coasta Bella project would disturb more than one acre of soil, the proposed project would be required to obtain coverage under the RWQCB NPDES General Storm Water Permit. The permit would require a SWPPP, which contains BMPs for construction and post-construction runoff.

Implementation of the BMPs for cannabis cultivation, CDFW regulations, and NPDES requirements (as applicable to the proposed Coasta Bella project) would facilitate compliance with water quality standards. Therefore, the proposed projects would not violate water quality standards or waste discharge requirements, and surface or groundwater quality would not be degraded. Impacts would be less than significant.

**10(b). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

The average rate of 1.0 AFY per acre is utilized for the analysis of water demand for the proposed projects because it is consistent with usage rates identified for two recently approved indoor cannabis grow operations in comparable locations, and is consistent with the usage rate reported by Monterey County’s Agricultural Commissioner’s Office (Source: 34). There is presently no comprehensive record of water usage on the existing project sites prior to current cultivation of cannabis. It is known that cut flower operations are historically the dominant activity in the greenhouses in the project area and at least one site, Gold Coast Gardens was cultivating roses just prior to cannabis cultivation commencing. Not all project sites were in active cultivation or were specifically cultivating cut flowers at the time of this analysis; therefore, the assumption that all sites are in active cut flower cultivation results in over-estimating existing water use rates at some sites, which in turn also over-estimates the amount of water use reduction that would occur with transitioning to cannabis cultivation under the proposed project.

However, all of these greenhouses have historically been used for non-cannabis cultivation and could immediately transition to non-cannabis cultivation without having to obtain any permits for the change in agricultural use and in order to compare the anticipated water usage rate for cannabis cultivation to pre-cannabis cultivation water usage on the project sites, it was necessary to make reasonable assumptions about the pre-cannabis historic use of the project sites.

Accordingly, in order to compare pre-cannabis cultivation with cannabis cultivation, this analysis reasonably assumes that all greenhouses that would be (and have been) converted to cannabis cultivation are in cut flower operation, and water uses on these sites would be converted from cut flower operations to cannabis cultivation operations.

In comparison with the water demand for cut flower cultivation in Monterey County (3.6 AFY per acre), the estimated water demand for cannabis cultivation (1.0 AFY per acre) at the project sites

would be approximately 74 percent less, assuming the transition of all sites from cut flower cultivation to cannabis cultivation.

As noted above, the assumption that all project sites would be converted from cut flower operation to cannabis cultivation realistically over-estimates that pre-project water uses on select sites, as it is reasonable to assume that some properties may have been under-utilized or were utilized at a lesser rate at the time the properties were or will be converted to cannabis cultivation. In addition, it is known that four of the five sites have already transitioned to cannabis cultivation, although the current extent of utilization of each project site has not been quantified for this analysis. Further, one site (Coasta Bella) is proposing to construct a 16,128-sf greenhouse, replacing two greenhouses (totally 76,000 sf) that were historically used for cut flower operation and have been demolished.

**Table 10** provides the water demand under historic/approved conditions (existing) and under proposed project conditions, and calculates the difference in water demand between these conditions, assuming full utilization for cut flower cultivation and cannabis cultivation at each of the project sites. As discussed in Section II, Description of the Proposed Projects, the previous use of cut flower most accurately represents the historic use of the sites for the baseline of the water demand analysis. As shown in **Table 10**, the proposed projects would result in a decrease in water demand at the project sites.

However, for the sake of comparison, a variety of sample scenarios are presented below, based on the water use assumptions discussed above.

- If all of the sites transition from full cut flower cultivation (3.6 AFY per acre) to full cannabis cultivation (1.0 AFY per acre): total water demand would decrease approximately 74 percent (**Table 10**)
- If all of the sites transition from utilizing 50 percent capacity for cut flower cultivation (13.9 acres at 3.6 AFY per acre = 50.3 AFY) to full cannabis cultivation (26.56 AFY): total water demand would decrease approximately 47 percent
- If all of the sites transition from utilizing 30 percent capacity for cut flower cultivation (8.4 acres at 3.6 AFY per acre = 30.2 AFY) to full cannabis cultivation (26.56 AFY): total water demand would decrease approximately 12 percent
- If all of the sites are currently utilizing 50 percent capacity for cut flower cultivation (50.3 AFY) and 50 percent capacity for cannabis cultivation (13.9 AFY) (total of 64.3 AFY): total water demand would decrease approximately 59 percent

The sample scenarios above demonstrate that the implementation of the proposed projects would result in reduced water demand rates, in comparison to both potential existing conditions (some cannabis cultivation) and pre-project conditions (no cannabis cultivation). Therefore, it is reasonable to determine that the proposed projects would result in a net decrease in water demand rates across all project sites.

Table 10. Estimated Water Demand					
Site	Historic/Approved Cultivation Area	Cut Flower Water Use (3.6 AFY/acre)	Build-out Cultivation	Cannabis Cultivation Water Use (1.0 AFY/acre)	Difference in Water Use (AFY/acre) (Percent Decrease)
Coasta Bella	224,425 sf (5.15 acres)	18.55	164,353 sf (3.77 acres)	3.77	-14.78 (80%)
Gold Coast Gardens	90,429 sf (2.08 acres)	7.47	90,429 sf (2.08 acres)	2.08	-5.39 (72%)
Coastal Farms	8,512 sf (0.20 acre)	0.70	8,512 sf (0.20 acre)	0.20	-0.50 (71%)
214 Lewis Road	774,870 sf (17.79 acres)	64.04	774,870 sf (17.79 acres)	17.79	-46.25 (72%)
12/12 Genetics	118,690 sf (2.72 acres)	9.81	118,690 sf (2.72 acres)	2.72	-7.09 (72%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,216,926</b>	<b>100.57</b>	<b>1,156,854</b>	<b>26.56</b>	<b>-74.01 (74%)</b>

Implementation of the proposed projects would occur in compliance with applicable laws and regulations, including but not limited to the moratorium on new wells within areas affected by seawater intrusion, and compliance with DCC regulation 16311(b), which requires location identification for groundwater wells.

The conversion of existing agricultural greenhouses and support structures to commercial cannabis use and construction of new cannabis facilities at one of the sites would result in a decrease of water demand by up to 74 percent. In addition, compliance with applicable laws and regulations will facilitate groundwater management of the basin and compliance with the groundwater management plan. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

**10(ci - ciii). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

With the exception of the Coasta Bella project, the proposed projects would not result in changes to the existing drainage patterns at the sites as no new construction is proposed. No drainage improvements are necessary or proposed at this time. The proposed projects would involve periodically inspecting and maintaining the existing drainage facilities as necessary. Therefore, these projects would not include new impervious surfaces or alter existing drainage patterns or alter drainage patterns for streams and rivers. In addition, implementation of the BMPs for cannabis cultivation described in 10(a) would avoid the alteration of the course of a stream or river, as well as substantial erosion, siltation, and surface runoff. Because these projects sites have an agricultural classification, activities at these sites would not require coverage under NPDES Construction General Permit. Therefore, impacts to on- and off-site sedimentation and runoff associated with the implementation of these proposed projects would be less than significant.

In accordance with MCC Chapter 16.20.070, Runoff Control, the retention basin at the Coasta Bella site would be designed to control runoff from a 10-year storm. The proposed basin would

be located in a disturbed portion of the site. In addition, the proposed project would involve periodically inspecting and maintaining the existing drainage facilities, as necessary. The construction and maintenance of the retention pond would occur in compliance with applicable regulations. The Coasta Bella site is located adjacent to the levee associated with the Pajaro River; however, there are no proposed improvements that would affect bed, bank, or channel of the levee. Therefore, the implementation of the retention basin would not result in alteration of drainage patterns for stream or rivers. In addition, as discussed in 7(b), because construction associated with the proposed Coasta Bella project would disturb more than one acre of soil, the proposed project would be required to obtain coverage under the RWQCB NPDES General Storm Water Permit. The permit would require a SWPPP, which contains BMPs for construction and post-construction runoff. Therefore, impacts to on- and off-site sedimentation and runoff associated with the implementation of the proposed Coasta Bella project would be less than significant.

**10(civ and d). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

Within Monterey County, development in the flood-prone fertile valleys has resulted in flooding conditions mostly in the Salinas Valley, but also in the Carmel, Pajaro, and Big and Little Sur River Valleys. Factors that contribute most significantly to potential flooding risk are development within the 100-year floodplain, levee failure, localized drainage problems (e.g., estuaries, marshes, and river basins), and dam failure.

The Salinas River and Carmel River Valleys face the greatest risk from dam failure; however, the Coasta Bella, Gold Coast Gardens, and 214 Lewis Road sites are located in a potential dam inundation zone (Source: 27, 31). The Coasta Bella and Gold Coast Gardens sites are located adjacent to the levee associated with the Pajaro River. While portions of these two sites are located within Special Flood Hazard Area Zone AE, no improvements or new development are proposed within areas designated as Zone AE. The proposed new structures at the Coasta Bella site would be located within Zone AO and would be elevated above the floodplain at an elevation of approximately 35 feet. The entire 214 Lewis Road site is located within Zone AE, with a base flood elevation between 34 and 37 feet. However, no new structures are proposed at this project site, and, therefore, no change in the volume of the flood hazard area would occur. These proposed projects would not result in the construction of habitable structures that would be occupied by people. The Coastal Farms and 12/12 Genetics sites are not located within a flood hazard zone. As a result, the proposed projects would not impede or redirect flow flows. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

The proposed project would not have a high-risk release of pollutants due to inundation in flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones. The projects sites are not located in a coastal area or near a large inland body of water. None of the project sites are located in a tsunami inundation area (Source: 31). As such, the project sites are not subject to tsunami or seiche. As described in 9(a), the proposed projects would be required to comply with existing federal, state, and local laws regulating the transport, use, and disposal of any hazardous materials. Hazardous materials would be stored properly, in accordance with BMPs and applicable regulations. Runoff controls would be implemented to prevent water quality impacts, and a spill plan would be developed to address any accidental spills. DCC regulations 15011(a)(12), 16304(a)(5), 16307, 16309, and 16310 require the preparation of a pest management plan and outline pesticide use requirements. Additionally, the transportation of hazardous materials is subject to the Hazardous Material



Transportation Act of 1975, which provides procedures and policies, material designations, packaging requirements, and operational rules for the transportation of hazardous materials. The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act also established hazardous waste disposal requirements (40 CFR parts 260 through 273). With adherence to existing hazardous materials regulations and laws, the proposed projects in the flood hazard areas (i.e., Coasta Bella, Gold Coast Gardens, and 214 Lewis Road) would not risk release of pollutants due to project inundation. Impacts would be less than significant.

**10(e). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

The proposed projects would not conflict with or obstruct the implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan.

The proposed projects are located within the Basin, which is managed per the direction of PV Water's GSP Alternative prepared by PV Water approved by DWR in July 2019 and updated and approved by PV's Board of Directors in November 2021. PV Water's GSP Alternative establishes estimates of the historical, current, and future water budgets in the subbasin based on the best available information. PV Water's GSP Alternative includes three phases that will be implemented over a 30-year period. Each phase includes projects, programs, and conservation measures with the goal of reaching sustainability in the basin by the completion of the final phase, or 2044 (Source: 45).

In the future, the anticipated net decrease in water demands on the proposed project sites that would occur as a result of replacing cut flower cultivation with cannabis cultivation may be reflected in measured data, collected through compliance with the SGMA. As mentioned above, PV Water's GSP Alternative details the water budget for the Basin. The SGMA requires monitoring networks be developed to promote the collection of data of sufficient quality, frequency, and distribution to characterize groundwater and related surface water conditions and to evaluate changing conditions that occur as the GSP(s) are implemented. The monitoring network is intended to: monitor changes in groundwater conditions relative to measurable objectives and minimum thresholds, and thereby demonstrate progress toward achieving measurable objectives; monitor impacts to the beneficial uses or users of groundwater; and quantify annual changes in water budget components (Source: 45).

The proposed projects are subject to compliance with the measurable objectives and minimum threshold for groundwater management identified in PV Water's GSP Alternative. Therefore, the conversion of the project sites and new structures that would occur under the proposed projects would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan. Impacts would be less than significant.

11. LAND USE AND PLANNING	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>				
a) Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**DISCUSSION/CONCLUSIONS:**

**11(a). Conclusion: No Impact.**

Four of the project sites are located within areas designated as Farmlands (F) and one site is within an area designated Agricultural Conservation in Coastal Zone (AC/CZ) in unincorporated Monterey County (Table 1 and Section II, Description of the Proposed Projects). Lands adjacent to the sites are primarily designated Farmlands and Agricultural Conservation. The project sites are located in the communities of Royal Oaks and Aromas. Each of the subject properties either contain on-site, or is immediately adjacent to, a single-family residence. Other rural residences also occur in the vicinity of the proposed projects.

The five proposed project sites contain existing greenhouses and agricultural support buildings that are currently or historically used for various agricultural purposes, including but not limited to, herbs, crops, and cut flowers. All but one site (i.e., 214 Lewis Road) is currently utilizing the existing greenhouses and other structures for cannabis operations. The proposed projects require commercial cannabis permits to convert and reuse the existing greenhouses and support buildings for cannabis cultivation, processing, manufacturing, and distribution. Only one project (i.e., Coasta Bella) is proposing new construction as a component of its application. The new construction would occur in previously developed areas of the site. Therefore, the proposed projects would not physically divide an established community.

**11(b). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

Development of four of the proposed project sites are governed by the County’s 2010 General Plan, NCAP, and the zoning regulations set forth in Title 21 of the MCC, and development of one of the sites is governed by the North County Local Coastal Program (NC LCP), which includes the NC LUP, zoning regulations set forth in the NC Implementation Plan, and Title 20 of the MCC.

On November 16, 2018, the Monterey County Board of Supervisors adopted Ordinance No. 5306 to amend Title 21 of the MCC to change commercial cannabis activities from a conditional use allowed subject to a Use Permit, to a principal use allowed subject to an Administrative Permit. Therefore, the ~~four~~<sup>six</sup> inland projects require approval of an Administrative Permit. On that same day, the Board of Supervisors adopted Resolution of Intent No. 18-413 to amend the Monterey County Coastal Implementation Plan (Title 20) to change commercial cannabis activities from a conditional use allowed subject to a CDP, to a principal use allowed subject to a Coastal Administrative Permit. The Resolution of Intent (18-413) was certified by the Coastal

Commission on September 27, 2019. The ordinance must return to the Board of Supervisors for adoption. Until then, the project within the Coastal Zone (i.e., 12/12 Genetics) would require approval of a CDP.

Commercial cannabis operations are allowed in certain inland and coastal zoning districts with an administrative permit or CDP (MCC Chapters 21.67, 20.67, and 7.90), as described below:

- Cultivation: Light Industrial, Heavy Industrial, Agricultural Industrial, Farmland, Agricultural Conservation, or Coastal Agricultural Preserve
- Distribution: Heavy Commercial, Light Industrial, Heavy Industrial, and Agricultural Industrial
- Manufacturing: Heavy Commercial, Light Industrial, Heavy Industrial, Agricultural Industrial, Farmland, Agricultural Conservation, or Coastal Agricultural Preserve

Cannabis activities are generally similar to the types of agricultural activities occurring in the Farmland and Agricultural Conservation in Coastal Zone, including soil-dependent agricultural uses, such as greenhouses. Mixed-light and nursery cannabis cultivation is specifically listed in Section 21.30.040 of the Zoning Ordinance as an allowed use subject to an administrative permit, and agricultural support facilities and processing plants are allowed subject to a use permit. Therefore, the proposed projects would be consistent with other allowed uses in the Farmland and AC/CZ districts and would not create land use conflicts with surrounding properties.

The proposed cannabis cultivation, processing manufacturing, and self-distribution operations at the project sites are consistent with the Farmland and AC/CZ uses and are consistent with the development standards within the zoning ordinance (Chapter 21.67 and 20.67 Commercial Cannabis Activities), listed below:

Cannabis cultivation<sup>9</sup> is only allowed pursuant to MCC Chapters 21.67 and 20.67. Pursuant to MCC Chapter 21.67.50 (inland zoning, amended June 2021), indoor and mixed-light cannabis cultivation and cannabis nurseries may be permitted with an administrative permit within the Light Industrial (LI), Heavy Industrial (HI), Agricultural Industrial (AI), or Farmland (F) zoning districts provided that the cultivation occurs within a greenhouse or agricultural support service facility that was permitted or legally established prior to January 1, 2016. On properties that contain one or more greenhouses legally established prior to January 1, 2016, cultivation may be permitted within legally established greenhouses, or within new or expanded greenhouses constructed after January 1, 2016. Agricultural support service facilities used for drying, trimming, processing and storage, may also be constructed to support permitted greenhouse cultivation. In all cases, cannabis uses require approval of an administrative permit, and all new or expanded construction must comply with the applicable regulations of this title.

Pursuant to MCC Chapter 20.67.50 (coastal zoning, adopted March 2018), cannabis cultivation may only be permitted in the Light Industrial (LI), Heavy Industrial (HI), Agricultural Industrial (AI), Agricultural Conservation (AC), or Coastal Agricultural Preserve (CAP) zoning districts with a CDP. It is the intent of the County to provide for the adaptive reuse of greenhouses in Monterey County and to restrict the proliferation of greenhouses or other structures on productive

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<sup>9</sup> Agricultural activities involving the planting, growing, harvesting, drying, curing, grading, or trimming of cannabis.

agricultural lands. To this end, within the AC and CAP zoning districts, indoor and mixed-light cannabis cultivation and cannabis nurseries may be permitted with a CDP provided that cultivation is consistent with all land use designations, and, within the AC and CAP zoning districts, the cultivation occurs only within a greenhouse or industrial building that was permitted or legally established prior to January 1, 2016. Greenhouses and industrial buildings may be improved for cannabis activities after January 1, 2016, provided that the footprint of the existing greenhouse(s) or industrial building(s) does not change.

Outdoor cultivation is not permitted in the County, except for a pilot program that is currently restricted to Big Sur, Cachagua, and Carmel Valley. Retail facilities are only permitted in Light Commercial and Heavy Commercial zoning districts. Manufacturing<sup>10</sup> is only permitted in Heavy Commercial, Light Industrial, Heavy Industrial, Agricultural Industrial, and Farmland zoning districts when combined with a cultivation permit.

The proposed cannabis operations are consistent with the following goals within the 2010 General Plan Agricultural Element (Source: 25, 27):

Goal AG-1: Promote the long-term protection, conservation, and enhancement of productive and potentially productive agricultural land.

Goal AG-2: Provide opportunities to retain, develop, and expand those agricultural-related enterprises and agricultural support uses.

Goal AG-3: Assure that the County's land use policies do not inappropriately limit or constrain "routine and ongoing agricultural activities).

Additionally, Goal LU-5 encourages a full range of industrial development compatible with surrounding land uses. Policy C-2.1 of the General Plan requires land uses that require concentrated commodity movement to be located with adequate access to necessary transportation facilities. The proposed projects would concentrate commercial medical cannabis activities in areas with convenient access to major roads and highways through the zoning restrictions. The project sites already support agricultural, industrial, or commercial uses with associated transportation systems, and, therefore, the proposed projects are consistent with these policies. Furthermore, Goal OS-1 calls for retention of the character and natural beauty of Monterey County through the preservation and maintenance of natural resources and agricultural operations.

The LCP was adopted to carry forward the goals and policies of the Coastal Act: 1) protect, maintain, enhance, and restore the overall quality of the coastal environment and its natural and man-made resources; 2) assure orderly, balanced utilization and conservation of coastal resources while taking into account the social and economic needs of the people of the State; 3) maximize public access to and along the coast and maximize public recreational opportunities in the Coastal Zone consistent with resource conservation principles and constitutionally protected rights of private property owners; 4) prioritize coastal-dependent development over other development on

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<sup>10</sup> An industrial use involving the production of raw medical cannabis either directly or indirectly, by extraction methods, chemical synthesis, or process whereby the raw agricultural product has been transformed into a concentrate, an edible product, or a topical product.

the coast; and 5) encourage State and local initiatives and cooperation in preparing procedures to implement coordinated planning and development for mutually beneficial uses, including education uses, in the Coastal Zone. The proposed commercial cannabis operations at the 12/12 Genetics site within the Coastal Zone do not conflict with any of the NC LCP policies (Source: 22, 24):

As the proposed projects would involve existing structures and new structures in previously developed areas within limited areas of the Farmland and AC/CZ zones, the proposed projects would be consistent with this policy. The proposed commercial cannabis uses are consistent with the Farmland and AC/CZ zoning for each project site and would not conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. Impacts would be less than significant.

<b>12. MINERAL RESOURCES</b>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**DISCUSSION/CONCLUSIONS:**

See previous Sections II.A (Project Description), II.B (Environmental Setting), and IV.A (Environmental Factors Potentially Affected), as well as the sources referenced.

<b>13. NOISE</b>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project result in:</b>				
a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

13. NOISE	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project result in:</b>				
c) For a project located within the vicinity of an airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**DISCUSSION:**

Sound is mechanical energy transmitted by pressure waves in a compressible medium such as air. Noise is defined as unwanted sound. Environmental noise is frequently measured in decibels (dB). The A-weighted decibel (dBA) is used to reflect the human ear’s sensitivity to sounds of different frequencies. On this scale, the sound level of normal talking is about 60 to 65 dBA. Because people are more sensitive to nighttime noise, sleep disturbance usually occurs at 40 to 45 dBA.

The intensity of environmental noise fluctuates over time, and several descriptors of time-averaged noise levels are typically used. For the evaluation of environmental noise, the most commonly used descriptors are  $L_{eq}$ ,  $L_{dn}$ , CNEL and SEL. The energy-equivalent noise level,  $L_{eq}$ , is a measure of the average energy content (intensity) of noise over any given period. Many communities use 24-hour descriptors of noise levels to regulate noise. The day-night average noise level,  $L_{dn}$ , is the 24-hour average of the noise intensity, with a 10-dBA “penalty” added for nighttime noise (10PM to 7AM.) to account for the greater sensitivity to noise during this period. CNEL, the community equivalent noise level, is similar to  $L_{dn}$  but adds an additional 5-dBA penalty for evening noise (7PM to 10PM). Another descriptor that is commonly discussed is the sound-exposure level, expressed as SEL. The SEL describes a receiver’s cumulative noise exposure from a single noise event, which is defined as an acoustical event of short duration (0.5 seconds), such as a backup beeper, the sound of an airplane traveling overhead, or a train whistle.

Generally, noise levels diminish as distance from the noise source increases. Some land uses are more sensitive to noise than others. Noise-sensitive land uses are generally defined as locations where people reside, or where the presence of unwanted sound could adversely affect the primary intended use of the land. Places where people live, sleep, recreate, worship, and study are generally considered to be sensitive to noise because intrusive noise can disrupt these activities.

Vibration is like noise in that it involves a source, a transmission path, and a receiver. While vibration is related to noise, it differs in that noise is generally considered to be pressure waves transmitted through air, whereas vibration usually consists of the excitation of a structure or surface. As with noise, vibration consists of amplitude and frequency. A person’s perception of the vibration will depend on their individual sensitivity to vibration, as well as the amplitude and frequency of the source and the response of the system which is vibrating. Vibration can be measured in terms of acceleration, velocity, or displacement. Measurements in terms of velocity are expressed as peak particle velocity (PPV) with units of inches per second (in/sec).

REGULATORY SETTING

Monterey County, like many local jurisdictions, includes land use-noise compatibility standards in its General Plan for exterior noise exposure standards, which are based on parameters established by the California Department of Health, Office of Noise Control and provided by the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research. Based on these standards, noise levels of 60 dBA L<sub>dn</sub> or less at various noise-sensitive receptor locations, including single- and multi-family residences, schools, hospitals, churches, and nursing homes are considered "normally acceptable" and noise levels of 60 to 70 dBA L<sub>dn</sub> are considered "conditionally acceptable".

MCC Chapter 10.60, Noise Control, describes the allowances and restrictions related to noise. The County’s noise level standards are summarized in **Tables 11** and **12** (source MCC Chapter 10.60). Section 10.60.030 states that at any time of the day, it is prohibited within the unincorporated area of the County to operate, assist in operating, allow, or cause to be operated any machine, mechanism, device, or contrivance which produced a noise level that exceed 85 dBA at 50 feet. This does not apply if the equipment is operated in excess of 2,500 feet from any occupied dwelling unit. This would apply to construction equipment.

Table 11. County of Monterey Exterior Noise Level Standards			
Zone	Time	Noise Level Standard (L <sub>eq</sub> dBA)	Maximum Level (dBA)
All	9:00 PM to 7:00 AM	45	65
Within 500 feet of a noise sensitive land use	10:00 PM to 7:00 AM (Monday through Saturday)	Not to exceed “acceptable” All day Sunday levels <sup>1</sup>	-
	All day Sunday		
	All day Holidays		
<i>Notes:</i> 1. See Table 12 for “acceptable” noise levels Source: 21			

Table 12. Land Use Compatibility for Noise Environments				
Land Use Category	Community Noise Exposure Level			
	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Low Density, Single-Family, Duplex, Mobile Homes	50-60	55-70	70-75	75-85
Residential – Multiple Family	50-65	60-70	70-75	70-85
Transient Lodging – Motel, Hotels	50-65	60-70	70-80	80-85
Schools, Libraries, Churches, Hospitals, Nursing Homes	50-70	60-70	70-80	80-85
Auditoriums, Concert Halls, Amphitheaters	N/A	50-70	N/A	65-85
Sports Arenas, Outdoor Spectator Sports	N/A	50-75	N/A	70-85
Playgrounds, Neighborhood Parks	50-70	N/A	67.5-75	72.5-85
Golf Courses, Riding Stable, Water Recreation, Cemeteries	50-70	N/A	70-80	80-85
Office Buildings, Business Commercial and Professional	50-70	67.5-77.5	75-85	N/A
Industrial, Manufacturing, Utilities, Agriculture	50-70	67.5-77.5	75-85	N/A

*Source: 27*

*Notes: NA - Not Applicable*

*Normally Acceptable – Specified land use is satisfactory, based upon the assumption that any buildings involved are of normal conventional construction, without any special noise insulation requirements*

*Conditionally Acceptable – New construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements is made and needed noise insulation features included in the design. Conventional construction, but with closed windows and fresh air supply systems or air conditioning will normally suffice.*

*Normally Unacceptable – New construction or development should be discouraged, and if it does proceed, a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements must be made and needed noise insulation features included in the design.*

*Clearly Unacceptable – New construction or development should generally not be undertaken.*

**CONCLUSIONS:**

**13(a). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

CONSTRUCTION NOISE

One of the five proposed projects, Coasta Bella, would involve the construction of a new greenhouse and two buildings, totaling approximately 46,000 sf. The construction of the proposed Coasta Bella project would involve minimal grading due to the flat topography of the site and would occur over a short timeframe (approximately eight months). Construction of the project would result in short-term noise increases in the project vicinity. Noise impacts from construction activities depend on the type of construction equipment used, the timing and length of activities, the distance between the noise generating construction activities and receptors and shielding. Construction activities would include site preparation, grading, construction, paving, and architectural coating. Construction equipment would include, but would not be limited to, graders, tractors/loaders/backhoes, cement and mortar mixers, pavers, rollers, saws, dozers, forklifts, and



air compressors. Typical hourly average construction noise levels could be as loud as 75 - 80 decibels at a distance of  $\pm$ 100 feet from the construction area during active construction periods. A sensitive receptor, a single-family residence, occurs immediately adjacent to the project site. However, noise from construction would be temporary and intermittent and building construction would occur approximately 500 feet from the residence. Construction activities would be limited to weekdays between the hours of 7:00 AM and 6:00 PM and no nighttime construction is required, which would limit noise impacts. Therefore, the construction activities associated with the proposed Coasta Bella project would not result in significant noise impacts. Impacts would be less than significant.

The proposed Coasta Bella project and other ~~four~~<sup>six</sup> proposed projects would involve minor greenhouse retrofit work and on-site improvements, as discussed in Section II, Description of the Proposed Projects. These proposed improvements would not require any demolition or construction of new facilities, and would not be anticipated to require heavy construction equipment or activities such as grading. The proposed activities would be similar to existing maintenance and upkeep of the previous uses on site. Although a sensitive receptor (i.e., single-family residence) occurs within or immediately adjacent to each of the project sites, these residences are accustomed to on-going agricultural activities on each site and in the vicinity. In addition, the duration of the proposed activities would be temporary and intermittent. Therefore, noise impacts associated with the proposed activities would be less than significant.

#### OPERATIONAL NOISE

The proposed projects are located in agricultural areas with existing agricultural and are consistent with the surrounding rural uses surrounding the project sites. As discussed above, single-family residences are the only sensitive receptors in close proximity to the project sites. Operational noise sources associated with the proposed projects could include mechanical equipment supporting the operation of the greenhouses and buildings, such as heating, ventilation, air conditioning units, and emergency generators. Per MCC Section 10.60.040(C), commercial agricultural operations are exempt from the County exterior noise standards because agricultural areas are anticipated to result in consistent, higher noise levels associated with farming than would be anticipated in a typical residential or commercial area. In addition, these noise sources are already associated with the existing uses, and operational noise levels would be similar to those currently existing on the properties. Therefore, the proposed projects would not expose people to noise in excess of established levels due to agricultural activities in the surrounding areas.

Project-generated traffic could result in elevated noise levels along local roadways. As discussed in Section 17, Transportation, the proposed projects would result in a very low increase in net daily trips, with the exception of the proposed 214 Lewis Road project. The proposed 214 Lewis Road project would generate the highest amount of traffic and a majority of that traffic would distribute along Salinas Road. It is not anticipated that new traffic generated due to this proposed project would noticeably degrade existing operations of the local transportation network and no project impacts are therefore expected. In addition, an increase of 108 daily trips dispersed on the rural road network would not result in a significant increase in traffic noise. Therefore, project traffic

noise levels would not be perceptible to nearby users, and traffic noise impacts from the proposed projects would be less than significant.

As a result, operational noise impacts from the proposed projects would be less than significant.

**13(b). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

CONSTRUCTION

Construction of the proposed Coasta Bella project would generate temporary groundborne vibration. It is not anticipated that the proposed site improvements (e.g., greenhouse retrofitting) at the other four project sites would generate any temporary groundborne vibration. A vibration impact could occur where noise-sensitive land uses are exposed to excessive vibration levels. There is one single-family residence located adjacent to the Coast Bella site. However, most of the construction activity would occur over 500 feet from the residence.

Vibratory compactors or rollers and pavement breakers can generate perceptible vibration. Heavy trucks can also generate groundborne vibration, which varies depending on vehicle type, weight, and pavement conditions. The Federal Transit Authority has published standard vibration levels and peak particle velocities for construction equipment. Construction vibration impacts on building structure are generally assessed in terms of peak particle velocity (PPV) or root mean square (RMS) velocity. The RMS velocity level and PPV for typical construction equipment at a distance of 25 feet<sup>11</sup> are listed in **Table 13** below.

Table 13. Vibration Source Amplitudes for Construction Equipment		
Equipment	Approximate Peak Particle Velocity at 25 Feet (inches/second)	RMS Velocity in Decibels (VdB) at 25 Feet
Vibratory roller	0.210	94
Large Bulldozers	0.089	87
Small Bulldozer	0.003	58
Loaded Trucks	0.076	86
Jackhammer	0.035	79
Source: California Department of Transportation, Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual, September 2013.		

Of the variety of equipment used during construction, the vibratory rollers that are anticipated to be used in the site preparation phase of construction would produce the greatest groundborne vibration levels. Impact equipment such as pile drivers is not expected to be used during construction of this project. Large vibratory rollers produce groundborne vibration levels ranging up to 0.210 inch per second (in/sec) PPV at 25 feet from the operating equipment. Vibration levels from construction equipment attenuate as they radiate from the source. Sensitive receptors could be exposed to groundborne vibrations of varying magnitudes depending on the type of equipment and proximity to construction activities, as shown in **Table 13**. Ground disturbing activities associated with project grading could also involve the operation of large and small bulldozers and

<sup>11</sup> Vibration amplitudes are usually expressed as peak particle velocity or the velocity of a parcel (real or imaged) in a medium as it transmits a wave.

loaded trucks. However, typical construction activities would be restricted to daytime hours with the least potential to affect nearby properties. The closest sensitive receptor is located over 500 feet away from the construction area, and, therefore, project-related groundborne vibration during construction would be less than significant.

**OPERATION**

The proposed projects are located in agricultural areas with existing agricultural and are consistent with the surrounding rural uses surrounding the project sites. As discussed above, single-family residences are the only sensitive receptors in close proximity to the project sites. Operation of the cannabis facilities would not require large, heavy equipment that would cause groundborne vibration. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

**13(c). Conclusion: No Impact.**

The nearest airport is the Watsonville Municipal Airport, located over three miles from the Gold Coast Gardens site. None of the project sites are located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan. Therefore, the proposed projects would not expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels. No impact would occur.

<b>14. POPULATION AND HOUSING</b>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>				
a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**DISCUSSION/CONCLUSIONS:**

See previous Sections II.A (Project Description), II.B (Environmental Setting), and IV.A (Environmental Factors Potentially Affected), as well as the sources referenced.

<b>15. PUBLIC SERVICES</b>		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project result in:</b>					
Substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:					
a)	Fire protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b)	Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c)	Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d)	Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e)	Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**DISCUSSION/CONCLUSIONS:**

See previous Sections II.A (Project Description), II.B (Environmental Setting), and IV.A (Environmental Factors Potentially Affected), as well as the sources referenced.

<b>16. RECREATION</b>		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a)	Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b)	Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**DISCUSSION/CONCLUSIONS:**

See previous Sections II.A (Project Description) and II.B (Environmental Setting) and Section IV.A (Environmental Factors Potentially Affected), as well as the sources referenced.

17. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>				
a) Conflict with a plan, ordinance or policy addressing of the circulation system, including transit, roadways, bicycle lanes and pedestrian paths?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**DISCUSSION:**

The following discussion is based on a traffic study prepared for the project by Kimley-Horn and Associates (May 28, 2020, Source: 41) and is included in **Appendix B**. The traffic study was conducted to assess the potential new traffic that would be generated by the five proposed cultivation and processing sites in north Monterey County and whether or not traffic impacts would result due to the project. Approved/historical, temporary/existing, and proposed/buildout development conditions were evaluated as part of the study; these conditions/scenarios evaluated in the study are described below. However, the County also requested the evaluation of existing uses, which have been temporarily allowed at the five sites. The analysis results indicate that each site would generate new trips during the AM and PM peak hour conditions. The increases in trip generation and potential impacts relates only to approved/historical uses and proposed/buildout uses.

The local roadway network is shown in **Figure 1**. Beyond the limits of the study area, the project trips disperse onto numerous local streets or onto regional facilities. The impact of trips that disperse on the local road network lessens as they move away from the project site. The local intersections included in the analysis were identified as potentially having the greatest effect of the proposed projects.

APPROVED/HISTORICAL CONDITIONS (CUT FLOWER)

All five sites are currently approved to cultivate and process flowers. This condition is referred to as the “cut flower” land use and/or “approved/historical conditions” throughout the study and is one of three conditions evaluated. **Table 14** shows the cultivation area and total building areas in square feet for this analysis scenario.

Table 14. Approved/Historical Conditions Building Area (Cut Flower)			
#	Site	Cultivation Area Only	Total Building Area <sup>1</sup>
1	723, 735, 745, & 755 San Juan Rd (Coasta Bella)	224,425 sf	226,325 sf
2	723 San Juan Rd (Gold Coast Gardens)	90,429 sf	95,744 sf
3	35 Kortright Ln (Coastal Farms)	8,512 sf	11,346 sf
4	250 Lewis Rd (214 Lewis Road LLC)	774,870 sf	815,715 sf
5	37 McGinnis Rd (12/12 Genetics LLC)	118,690 sf	126,720 sf
Notes: 1. Includes cultivation area.			

**TEMPORARY/EXISTING CONDITIONS (CANNABIS)**

All five sites have been temporarily permitted to cultivate and process cannabis. Therefore, the existing operations at these five sites cultivates and produces cannabis products and is referred to as “temporary/existing conditions” throughout the study and is the second of three conditions evaluated in this study. **Table 15** shows the cultivation areas and total building areas in square feet for this analysis scenario.

Table 15. Temporary/Existing Conditions Building Area (Cannabis)			
#	Site	Temporary Cultivation Area Only	Temporary Total Building Area <sup>1</sup>
1	723, 735, 745, & 755 San Juan Rd (Coasta Bella)	148,225 sf	154,390 sf
2	723 San Juan Rd (Gold Coast Gardens)	90,429 sf	95,744 sf
3	35 Kortright Ln (Coastal Farms)	8,512 sf	11,346 sf
4	250 Lewis Rd (214 Lewis Road LLC)	774,870 sf	815,715 sf
5	37 McGinnis Rd (12/12 Genetics LLC)	118,690 sf	126,720 sf
Notes: 1. Includes cultivation area.			

**PROPOSED/BUILDOUT CONDITIONS (CANNABIS)**

Applicants for all five sites propose to conduct permanent cannabis cultivation and processing operations in buildout conditions. Therefore, the future operations at these five sites would continue to produce cannabis products and is referred to as “future/buildout conditions” throughout the study and is the third of three conditions evaluated in this study. **Table 16** shows the cultivation area and total building areas in square feet for this analysis scenario.

Table 16. Proposed/Buildout Conditions Building Area (Cannabis)			
#	Site	Buildout Cultivation Area Only	Buildout Total Building Area <sup>1</sup>
1	723, 735, 745, & 755 San Juan Rd (Coasta Bella)	164,353 sf	200,018 sf
2	723 San Juan Rd (Gold Coast Gardens)	90,429 sf	95,744 sf
3	35 Kortright Ln (Coastal Farms)	8,512 sf	11,346 sf
4	250 Lewis Rd (214 Lewis Road LLC)	774,870 sf	815,715 sf
5	37 McGinnis Rd (12/12 Genetics LLC)	118,690 sf	126,720 sf
Notes: 1. Includes cultivation area.			

It should be noted that building area changes and construction will only occur at Site 1 (Coasta Bella) between the three conditions, with 226,325 square feet of total building area assumed in approved/historical conditions (224,425 square feet of cultivation area), 154,390 square feet of total building area in temporary/existing conditions (148,225 square feet of cultivation area), and 200,018 square feet of total building area in proposed/buildout conditions (164,353 square feet of cultivation area). Sites 2, 3, 4, and 5 do not propose to construct or develop any additional buildings or cultivation areas.

TRIP GENERATION ANALYSIS

A trip is defined as a single or one-directional vehicle movement with either the origin or destination at the project site. In other words, a trip can be either “to” or “from” the site. For purposes of estimating the worst-case effects of traffic on the surrounding street network, trip generation estimates and assumptions are provided for daily weekday trips, AM peak hour trips (typically occurring during the peak morning period 7:00 am-9:00 am), and PM peak hour trips (typically occurring during the peak evening period of 4:00 pm-6:00 pm).

The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation manual provides trip generation estimates and methodologies for a variety of common land uses based on empirical data collected throughout America over the past couple decades. However, the cut flower and cannabis are unique land uses and are not accounted for in the ITE trip generation dataset. Thus, trip generation rates for the traffic study were determined based on existing vehicular traffic counts collected at multiple study sites in a similar fashion to ITE rate development.

On Tuesday, June 4, 2019, 24-hour driveway count data was collected at the Coasta Bella and Gold Coast Gardens sites (Sites 1 and 2). Peak period driveway count data was collected at the 12/12 Genetics driveways (Site 3) from 7:00 am to 9:00 am and 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm. These datasets reflect the temporary/existing conditions trip generation rates for the cannabis uses at the three sites. The trip generation rates developed as part of this exercise were also used to estimate the temporary/existing conditions trip generation estimates for the Coastal Farms and 214 Lewis Road sites (Sites 3 and 4) where existing data was not available, as well as for daily trip generation estimates at the 12/12 Genetics site.

The temporary/existing conditions rates reflect the trip generation due to the cannabis cultivation and production operations and were also assumed for proposed/buildout trip generation estimates for each site.

Existing vehicular driveway count data was collected for cut flower greenhouses as part of the *Final Multiple Cannabis Cultivation Facilities Traffic Impact Study (Salinas Area Traffic Study)* dated June 12, 2020, which accurately reflects the approved/historical conditions of this traffic study<sup>12</sup> (Source: 34). The *Salinas Area Traffic Study* was prepared for 45 cannabis facilities in southern Monterey County. Thus, the weekday daily, AM peak hour, and PM peak hour trip generation rates from this data source was assumed for the approved/historical conditions analysis of the five sites evaluated in this study.

The trip generation rates developed for the cut flower and cannabis land uses are based on the gross floor area of cultivation space assumed for each site and analysis scenario. As described in above, each site includes additional space for processing and/or distribution and this additional building area is provided at each site to support the cultivation operations. Units for the cut flower facilities (approved/historical conditions) and cannabis facilities (temporary/existing and proposed/buildout conditions) are trips per 1,000 square feet of cultivation building area; however, the trip generation estimates include all trips to/from the site, irrespective if they are cultivation employees, processing/distribution employees, deliveries/pick-ups, etc.

Driveway count data collected as part of the study and assumed in the trip generation analysis is included in the appendix of the study in **Appendix B**.

#### *Approved/Historical Trip Generation Estimates*

As described above, cut flower trip generation rate data was obtained from the *Salinas Area Traffic Study*. These previously published rates were established from empirical data collected at an existing site with similar land use characteristics to the approved/historical land use characteristics of the five project sites evaluated in this study. The weekday trip generation rates published in the *Salinas Area Traffic Study* are as follows:

- Daily = 0.78 trips per 1,000 square feet of cultivation area
- AM Peak Hour = 0.05 trips per 1,000 square feet of cultivation area
- PM Peak Hour = 0.05 trips per 1,000 square feet of cultivation area

Utilizing the *Salinas Area Study* rates and the approved/historical cultivation building areas described in **Table 14** above results in a total of 956 daily trips, 62 AM peak hour trips (50 in / 12 out), and 62 PM peak hour trips (16 in / 46 out) for the five sites in aggregate. **Table 17** provides trip generation estimates by site and summarizes the assumptions made in arriving at these results.

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<sup>12</sup> Kimley-Horn and Associates collaborated with the project's traffic engineer, Rick Engineering, to apply consistent assumptions regarding trip generation for cannabis facilities. The draft study was provided to Kimley-Horn and Associates early in the planning process (April 2020) and finalized for publication in June 2020, along with the Initial Study for the project. It is important to note that the assumptions regarding trip generation developed in the draft study are consistent with assumptions in the final study.



### *Temporary/Existing Trip Generation Estimates*

As described above, cannabis trip generation rate data was obtained by counting the number of trips entering and exiting driveways at multiple project sites. These rates were established from empirical data collected at these existing sites with land use characteristics consistent with cannabis cultivation and processing. Trip generation rate estimates for three project sites are provided below.

Coasta Bella trip generation rates developed from existing driveway data are as follows:

- Daily = 1.03 trips per 1,000 square feet of cultivation area
- AM Peak Hour = 0.07 trips per 1,000 square feet of cultivation area
- PM Peak Hour = 0.11 trips per 1,000 square feet of cultivation area

Gold Coast Gardens trip generation rates developed from existing driveway data are as follows:

- Daily = 0.75 trips per 1,000 square feet of cultivation area
- AM Peak Hour = 0.23 trips per 1,000 square feet of cultivation area
- PM Peak Hour = 0.21 trips per 1,000 square feet of cultivation area

12/12 Genetics trip generation rates developed from existing driveway data are as follows:

- Daily = Not collected<sup>13</sup>
- AM Peak Hour = 0.09 trips per 1,000 square feet of cultivation area
- PM Peak Hour = 0.08 trips per 1,000 square feet of cultivation area

The average weekday trip generation rates developed from the existing data described above and assumed for Sites 3, 4, and Site 5 (where data was not available) are as follows:

- Daily = 0.92 trips per 1,000 square feet of cultivation area<sup>14</sup>
- AM Peak Hour = 0.13 trips per 1,000 square feet of cultivation area
- PM Peak Hour = 0.15 trips per 1,000 square feet of cultivation area

Utilizing the rates and the temporary/existing cultivation building areas described in **Table 15** above results in a total of 1,051 daily trips, 146 AM peak hour trips (129 in / 17 out), and 164 PM peak hour trips (26 in / 138 out) for the five sites in aggregate. **Table 17** provides trip generation estimates by site and summarizes the assumptions made in arriving at these results.

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<sup>13</sup> As discussed above, 24-hour driveway count data was collected at the Coasta Bella and Gold Coast Gardens sites and peak period driveway count data was collected at the 12/12 Genetics driveways (it was not feasible for equipment to be left at 12/12 Genetics site). The trip generation rates developed as part of this exercise were also used to estimate the temporary/existing conditions trip generation estimates for the Coastal Farms and 214 Lewis Road sites where existing data was not available, as well as for daily trip generation estimates at the 12/12 Genetics site.

<sup>14</sup> 219 (daily trips counted at Coasta Bella and Gold Coast Gardens) / 238 (cultivation building area for Coasta Bella and Gold Coast Gardens) = 0.92 (the average existing trip generation rate for the three sites where daily information was not available). Please refer to Table 4.

### *Proposed/Buildout Trip Generation Estimates*

Cannabis trip generation rates were described for temporary/existing conditions. Since all five project sites are proposed to continue to cultivate and process cannabis products in the proposed/buildout conditions and the proposed operations will be essentially the same as in temporary conditions, the trip generation rates assumed in temporary/existing conditions are also assumed in proposed/buildout conditions.

Utilizing the rates and the proposed/buildout cultivation building areas described in **Table 16** above results in a total of 1,069 daily trips, 147 AM peak hour trips (130 in / 17 out), and 165 PM peak hour trips (26 in / 139 out) for the five sites in aggregate. **Table 17** provides trip generation estimates by site and summarizes the assumptions made in arriving at these results.

### *Net New Trip Generation Estimates*

The proposed projects' net new trip generation was evaluated to determine how many new trips would be generated and distributed onto the local roadway network due to the change from the approved/historical land uses and building areas, compared to the proposed/buildout land uses and building areas. This evaluation can be described with the following equation:

$$\text{Net New Trips} = (\text{proposed conditions trips}) - (\text{approved conditions trips})$$

As described above, the proposed/buildout conditions would generate approximately 1,069 daily weekday trips, 147 AM peak hour trips, and 165 PM peak hour trips. Likewise, the approved/historical conditions would generate approximately 956 daily weekday trips, 62 AM peak hour trips, and 62 PM peak hour trips. Thus, all of the individual projects **would generate a total of approximately 113 net new daily trips, 85 net new AM peak hour trips, and 103 net new PM peak hour trips**. This estimate represents the total net new trips generated by the five project sites combined between the historical and the proposed uses.

**Table 18** shows the net new trip generation estimates by site. In addition, the following section describes trip distribution and assignment estimates for each site to determine where the new trips would travel in the project vicinity.

**Table 17. Weekday Trip Generation Estimates**

#	Site	Land Use	Cultivation Building Area	Unit	Daily		AM Peak Hour			PM Peak Hour					
					Rate	Trips	Rate	In	Out	Total	Rate	In	Out	Total	
<b>Trip Generation Data</b>															
	South Monterey County Cannabis Traffic Study <sup>1</sup>	Cut Flower		1,000 SQFT	0.78		0.05	80%	20%	100%	0.05	25%	75%	100%	
	North Monterey County Cannabis Driveway Counts (Avg) <sup>2</sup>	Cannabis		1,000 SQFT	0.92		0.13	88%	12%	100%	0.15	17%	83%	100%	
<b>Approved (Historical) Conditions</b>															
1	723, 735, 745, & 755 San Juan Rd (Coasta Bella) <sup>1</sup>	Cut Flower	224.425	1,000 SQFT	0.78	176	0.05	9	2	11	0.05	3	8	11	
2	723 San Juan Rd (Gold Coast Gardens) <sup>1</sup>	Cut Flower	90.429	1,000 SQFT	0.78	72	0.05	4	1	5	0.05	1	4	5	
3	35 Kortright Ln (Coastal Farms) <sup>1</sup>	Cut Flower	8.512	1,000 SQFT	0.78	8	0.05	1	0	1	0.05	0	1	1	
4	250 Lewis Rd (214 Lewis Road LLC) <sup>1</sup>	Cut Flower	774.870	1,000 SQFT	0.78	606	0.05	31	8	39	0.05	10	29	39	
5	37 McGinnis Rd (12/12 Genetics LLC) <sup>1</sup>	Cut Flower	118.690	1,000 SQFT	0.78	94	0.05	5	1	6	0.05	2	4	6	
<b>Total Approved (Historical) Gross Trips</b>							<b>956</b>		<b>50</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>62</b>		<b>16</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>Temporary Use (Existing) Conditions</b>															
1	723, 735, 745, & 755 San Juan Rd (Coasta Bella) <sup>3</sup>	Cannabis	148.225	1,000 SQFT	1.03	152	0.07	9	2	11	0.11	4	13	17	
2	723 San Juan Rd (Gold Coast Gardens) <sup>4</sup>	Cannabis	90.429	1,000 SQFT	0.75	68	0.23	19	2	21	0.21	2	17	19	
3	35 Kortright Ln (Coastal Farms) <sup>2</sup>	Cannabis	8.512	1,000 SQFT	0.92	8	0.13	2	0	2	0.15	0	2	2	
4	250 Lewis Rd (214 Lewis Road LLC) <sup>2</sup>	Cannabis	774.870	1,000 SQFT	0.92	714	0.13	89	12	101	0.15	20	96	116	
5	37 McGinnis Rd (12/12 Genetics LLC) <sup>5</sup>	Cannabis	118.690	1,000 SQFT	0.92	109	0.09	10	1	11	0.08	0	10	10	
<b>Total Temporary Use (Existing) Gross Trips</b>							<b>1,051</b>		<b>129</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>146</b>		<b>26</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>164</b>
<b>Proposed Use (Buildout) Conditions</b>															
1	723, 735, 745, & 755 San Juan Rd (Coasta Bella) <sup>3</sup>	Cannabis	164.353	1,000 SQFT	1.03	170	0.07	10	2	12	0.11	4	14	18	
2	723 San Juan Rd (Gold Coast Gardens) <sup>4</sup>	Cannabis	90.429	1,000 SQFT	0.75	68	0.23	19	2	21	0.21	2	17	19	
3	35 Kortright Ln (Coastal Farms) <sup>2</sup>	Cannabis	8.512	1,000 SQFT	0.92	8	0.13	2	0	2	0.15	0	2	2	
4	250 Lewis Rd (214 Lewis Road LLC) <sup>2</sup>	Cannabis	774.870	1,000 SQFT	0.92	714	0.13	89	12	101	0.15	20	96	116	
5	37 McGinnis Rd (12/12 Genetics LLC) <sup>5</sup>	Cannabis	118.690	1,000 SQFT	0.92	109	0.09	10	1	11	0.08	0	10	10	
<b>Total Proposed Use (Buildout) Gross Trips</b>							<b>1,069</b>		<b>130</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>147</b>		<b>26</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>165</b>
<b>Net New Trips = Proposed (Buildout) - Approved (Historical)</b>															
1	723, 735, 745, & 755 San Juan Rd (Coasta Bella) <sup>3</sup>					-6		1	0	1		1	6	7	
2	723 San Juan Rd (Gold Coast Gardens) <sup>4</sup>					-4		15	1	16		1	13	14	
3	35 Kortright Ln (Coastal Farms) <sup>2</sup>					0		1	0	1		0	1	1	
4	250 Lewis Rd (214 Lewis Road LLC) <sup>2</sup>					108		58	4	62		10	67	77	
5	37 McGinnis Rd (12/12 Genetics LLC) <sup>5</sup>					15		5	0	5		-2	6	4	
<b>Total Net New Trips</b>							<b>113</b>		<b>80</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>85</b>		<b>10</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>103</b>

Notes:

1. Trip generation rates based on the gross building floor area for cut flower cultivation only. The "Multiple Cannabis Cultivation Facilities Traffic Impact Study" for South Monterey County sites data used.
2. Trip generation rates based on the gross building floor area for cannabis cultivation only. Peak hour and daily driveway count data collected at cannabis sites in North Monterey County and rates determined by taking the average.
3. Existing Conditions Driveway Count data collected for 24 hours at Coasta Bella site on June 4, 2019.
4. Existing Conditions Driveway Count data collected for 24 hours at Gold Coast Gardens site on June 4, 2019.
5. Existing Conditions Driveway Count peak period data collected at 37 McGinnis Road site on June 4, 2019.

TRIP DISTRIBUTION & ASSIGNMENT ASSESSMENT

A summary of the net new trip generation estimates for each study site is provided in **Table 18** below.

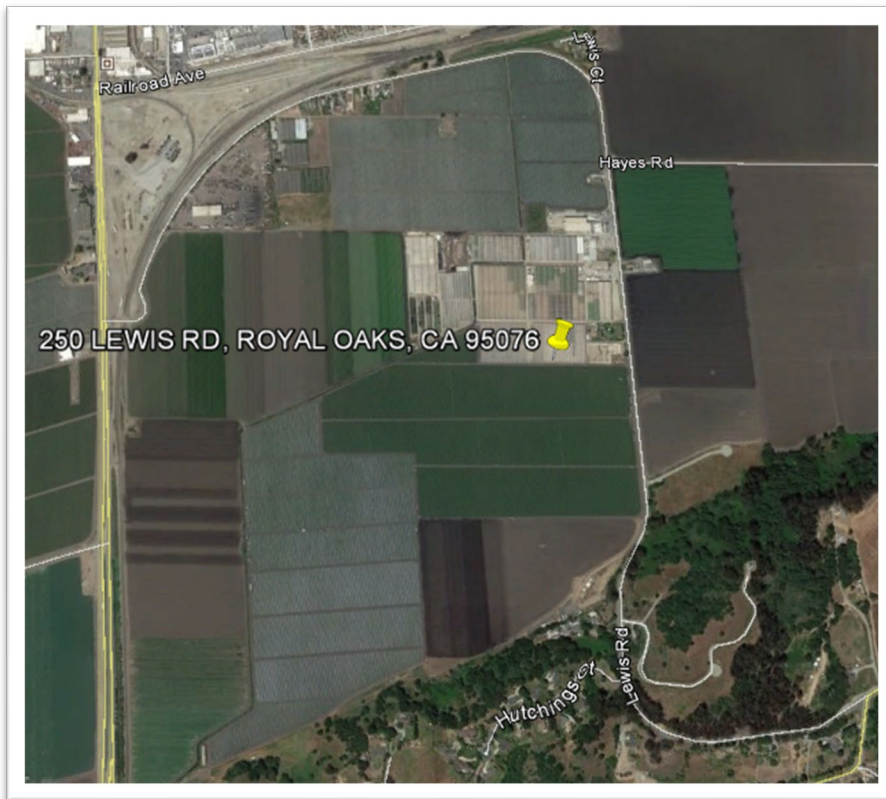
Table 18. Net New Trip Generation Summary by Site				
#	Site	Net New Daily Trips	Net New AM Peak Hour Trips	Net New PM Peak Hour Trips
1	723, 735, 745, & 755 San Juan Rd (Coasta Bella)	-6	1	7
2	723 San Juan Rd (Gold Coast Gardens)	-4	16	14
3	35 Kortright Ln (Coastal Farms)	0	1	1
4	250 Lewis Rd (214 Lewis Road LLC)	108	62	77
5	37 McGinnis Rd (12/12 Genetics LLC)	15	5	4

While the net new trips represent the difference between historic and proposed cultivation areas and building additions, the characters of the daily activities is such that peak hour and daily trip rates generated by the cannabis is different compared to the cut-flower uses. Consistent with County policies, net new weekday, AM, and PM peak hour trip generation estimates should be evaluated to determine if traffic impacts would occur on the local network due to proposed projects. As shown in the above table, Coasta Bella, Gold Coast Gardens, Coastal Farms, and 12/12 Genetics sites (Sites 1, 2, 3, and 5) would result in a very low increase in trips above what the approved/historical land uses generate. Since the project sites would utilize existing driveways for site access, it is not anticipated that these four sites warrant further analysis, as transportation related impacts would not be incurred due to such a low increase in trips.

The 214 Lewis Road site (Site 4) is anticipated to generate approximately 108 net new daily trips, 62 net new AM peak hour trips, and 77 net new PM peak hour trips. This number of trips warrants further evaluation to determine where they would distribute on the local network and whether or not the local network would be impacted; this evaluation is provided below.

*214 Lewis Road Site Trip Assignment*

The 214 Lewis Road site location is shown in **Figure 14** below:



**Figure 14. 214 Lewis Road Site Location**

The project site's access points are located along Lewis Road (east of the yellow pin shown in **Figure 14**). Thus, trips to and from the site would distribute north and south along Lewis Road. All trips to/from Watsonville would travel along Lewis Road north and west of the site, and then continue on along Salinas Road to the north. Trips to/from the south would either travel along Lewis Road from the south and distribute along Garin Road, Vega Road, and Hall Road, or would travel to the site from south Salinas Road and utilize north Lewis Road.

Based on high-level assumptions and knowledge of the area, it is anticipated that roughly 50% of trips to/from the site will originate or end in the City of Watsonville and the remaining 50% of trips would originate or end in Monterey County, south of the 214 Lewis Road site. Note that this 50/50 distribution includes employee trips and deliveries/pickups.

All trips to/from Watsonville would travel along Salinas Road and north Lewis Road (50% of net new trips). Approximately half of trips to/from south of the project site would also travel along Salinas Road and north Lewis Road (25% of net new trips). The remaining 25% that are anticipated to originate or end in Monterey County south of the project site would distribute along south Lewis Road, Garin Road, Vega Road, and/or Hall Road.

Based on these distribution assumptions and trip generation estimates, approximately 75% of the 214 Lewis Road site's net new trips would travel through the Salinas Road & Lewis Road intersection. Thus, new trips through this intersection would be 81 daily trips ( $0.75 * 108 = 81$ ), 47

AM peak hour trips ( $0.75 \times 62 = 47$ ), and 58 PM peak hour trips ( $0.75 \times 77 = 58$ ). The 214 Lewis Road site would generate the highest amount of traffic and a majority of that traffic would distribute along Salinas Road. It is not anticipated that new traffic generation due to this proposed project would noticeably degrade existing operations of the local transportation network and no project impacts are therefore expected.

## **CONCLUSIONS:**

### **17a). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

Based on the traffic study conducted by Kimley-Horn and Associates, the net new trip generation results, which are a comparison between proposed/buildout trips and approved/historical trips, are relatively low and are not anticipated to noticeably degrade operations along the local roadway network. While the 214 Lewis Road site would generate the highest amount of traffic, based on the traffic study, it is not anticipated that new traffic generation due to this proposed project would noticeably degrade existing operations of the local transportation network and no significant project impacts are therefore expected.

The primary public transit service in the County of Monterey is the bus service provided by Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST). MST focuses on improving operational conditions through established bus routes and schedules that efficiently meet travel demands, reduce travel times, improve service reliability, and encourage bike-and-ride initiatives. All MST buses are wheelchair accessible and equipped with bike racks. In the vicinity of the project sites, bus routes are provided along Porter Drive and Hall Road.

The County of Monterey has an adopted 2008 General Bikeways Plan that designate routes along roadways that can be used by bicycling commuters and recreational riders for safe access to major employers, shopping centers and schools. In addition, the Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC) has an adopted Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, which identifies existing and proposed bicycle and pedestrian facilities in Monterey County and the communities therein. This plan is utilized to prioritize project funding. Most bicycle routes in the project area are part of the existing and proposed street and highway system, being either lanes on roadway shoulders or designated routes that mix with the traffic. Sidewalks are currently provided along major roadways, but do not exist along the more rural roadways adjacent to the project sites.

The proposed projects would not result in a significant increase in employees that would require the construction new alternative transportation facilities (e.g., bicycle, pedestrian, and transit). Each site plan includes parking for employees and vendors, and access improvements at each driveway to ensure public safety and compatibility with existing roadways. Based on a review of the applicable programs, ordinances, and policies regarding alternative modes of transportation (e.g., bicycle, pedestrian, and transit), the proposed projects would not result in any conflicts with existing plans. This would be a less-than-significant impact.

### **17b). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

SB 743, which was codified in PRC Section 21099, required changes to the CEQA Guidelines regarding the analysis of transportation impacts. Pursuant to Section 21099, the criteria for determining the significance of transportation impacts must “promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, the development of multimodal transportation networks, and a diversity of land

uses.” As a result, the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR) proposed changes to the CEQA Guidelines that identify vehicle miles traveled (VMT) as the most appropriate metric to evaluate a project’s transportation impacts. VMT refers to the amount and distance of automobile travel attributable to a project.

In 2018, OPR released a technical advisory containing the recommendations regarding the assessment of VMT. The technical advisory provides recommendations for assessing VMT and significance thresholds for residential, office, retail, and transportation projects. It does not provide guidance on assessing VMT or recommend significance thresholds associated with agricultural projects. As noted in the advisory, agencies are directed to choose metrics that are appropriate for their jurisdiction to evaluate the potential impacts of a project in terms of VMT. The change to VMT was formally adopted as part of updates to the CEQA Guidelines on December 28, 2018. The deadline for adopting policies to implement SB 743 and the provisions of CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b) was July 1, 2020.

The technical advisory also discusses potential screening thresholds for land use projects. Many agencies use “screening thresholds” to quickly identify when a project should be expected to cause a less-than-significant impact without conducting a detailed study (CEQA Guidelines 15063(c)(3)(C), 15128, and Appendix G). The technical advisory suggests that lead agencies may screen out VMT impacts using project size, maps, and transit availability. Specifically, the advisory states that, absent substantial evidence indicating that a project would generate a potentially significant level of VMT, or would be inconsistent with a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) or general plan, projects that generate or attract fewer than 110 trips per day generally may be assumed to cause a less-than-significant transportation impact.

While not formally adopted or approved, the County has developed Draft VMT thresholds based on the guidance provided by OPR. Using the County’s Draft VMT thresholds, Kimley-Horn and Associates prepared VMT analyses for each of the project sites (September 24, 2021, Source: 41), which are included in **Appendix B**. The County’s Draft VMT thresholds consider the VMT performance of residential and non-residential components of a project separately, using the efficiency metrics of VMT per capita and VMT per employee, respectively. For retail components of a project, or other customer-focused uses, the county-wide VMT effect is analyzed. The Monterey County’s Draft VMT thresholds of significance are summarized below for each of these components:

- Residential – 15% below baseline countywide VMT per Capita
- Employment-based land uses (e.g., office) – 15% below baseline countywide VMT per Employee
- Customer-based non-residential land uses (e.g., retail) – No net increase in VMT

Based on the Draft VMT thresholds, a project is considered to result in a significant impact if the VMT per Employee for the proposed project exceeds 85-percent of the County average for the respective metric as noted above. As the proposed projects are replacing an existing use it can be considered a redevelopment project in terms of VMT analysis according to the OPR Guidelines, which state that, “Where a project replaces existing VMT-generating land uses, if the replacement leads to a net overall decrease in VMT, the project would lead to a less-than-significant



transportation impact. If the project leads to a net overall increase in VMT, then the thresholds [set by the lead agency] should apply.”

The proposed Coasta Bella and Gold Coast Gardens projects would result in a net decrease of VMT (-10 trips) when comparing the daily trips for the existing use to the proposed projects (**Table 17**). Therefore, these proposed projects would not have a significant transportation impact for an agricultural facility.

As shown in **Table 17**, the proposed Coastal Farms project would not result in a net increase in daily trips. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact as a redevelopment project and there is no need to compare the proposed project’s VMT per Employee to the County’s Draft VMT threshold for an agricultural use.

The proposed 214 Lewis Road project would result in a net increase in daily trips of approximately 108 trips (**Table 17**). Therefore, the proposed project cannot be assumed to result in a less than significant impact as a redevelopment project and, thus, there is a need to compare the proposed project’s VMT per Employee to the County’s Draft VMT threshold for an agricultural use. As shown in **Table 19**, the proposed 214 Lewis Road project results in a VMT per employee below the County’s Draft VMT threshold for agricultural use. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a less-than-significant transportation impact.

<b>Table 19. Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) by Land Use and Scenario for Proposed 214 Lewis Road Project</b>	
<b>Scenario</b>	<b>VMT/Employee (Agricultural)</b>
<b>Calculated VMT per Employee by Scenario</b>	
County Average	1.8
County Draft VMT Threshold	1.5
Proposed Project	1.4
<b>VMT per Employee as a Percent of Threshold by Scenario</b>	
Proposed Project	93%
<b>Over Threshold?</b>	
Proposed Project	<b>No</b>



The proposed 12/12 Genetics project would result in a net increase in daily trips of approximately 16 trips (**Table 17**). However, the number of trips generated by the proposed project falls below the daily trips' threshold of 110 daily trips. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less-than-significant transportation impact.

Based on OPR guidelines, each proposed site needs to be evaluated on its own merits and compared to the thresholds set by the County. Note that these thresholds remain unchanged regardless of the planning horizon being evaluated (they are the same for existing and cumulative analyses). Based on the analyses in **Appendix B**, the proposed projects would result in a less-than-significant transportation impact, and this conclusion would still hold for cumulative conditions.

As discussed above, the each of proposed projects' traffic impacts would be less than significant. Therefore, the proposed projects would not conflict with or be inconsistent with an applicable threshold of significance adopted per CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b).

**17c). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

Access to the project sites would be provided by existing roadways, driveways, and agricultural access roads. No design features associated with the projects would affect the existing roadways and, therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

**17d). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

As discussed in 17a), the proposed projects would not result in significant impacts to the local roadway network. In addition, each of the project site plans are designed to include the required access specifications for emergency vehicles. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

<b>18. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES</b>		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>					
a)	Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resources, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				
i)	Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historic Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii)	A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**DISCUSSION:**

California Assembly Bill (AB) 52, in effect since July 2015, provides CEQA protections for tribal cultural resources. All lead agencies approving projects under CEQA are required, if formally requested by a culturally affiliated California Native American Tribe, to consult with such tribe regarding the potential impact of a project on tribal cultural resources before releasing an environmental document. Under California PRC Section 21074, tribal cultural resources include site features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, or objects that are of cultural value to a California Native American tribe and that are either included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) or in a local register of historical resources, or a resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be of significant tribal cultural value.

**CONCLUSIONS:**

**18(ai) and (aii). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

Pursuant to PRC Section 21080.3.1, the HCD-Planning Division consulted with Louise Ramierz, the tribal chairwoman of the Ohlone-Costanoan, Esselen Nation (OCEN) regarding the proposed projects on June 24, 2020. OCEN is generally opposed to land disturbance that has the potential to impact archaeological resources. OCEN is concerned with unearthing artifacts or human

remains belonging to their tribal ancestors. To mitigate potential impacts to these resources, OCEN requests a tribal monitor to be present during all earth disturbing activities.

Only the Coasta Bella project would involve earth disturbing activities, as the other proposed projects would utilize existing greenhouses and buildings on-site. No specific impacts to archaeological resources are anticipated and no specific tribal cultural resources have been identified that would warrant tribal monitoring of development on these sites in this case. Compliance with standard County COA and DCC regulations would ensure that any unexpected resources discovered during construction are properly evaluated and treated with appropriate dignity because they would require treatment, evaluation, and mitigation for previously undiscovered cultural resources, if encountered. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

<b>19. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS</b>		Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>	Potentially Significant Impact			
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**DISCUSSION:**

WATER

The water demand analysis in this IS is based on the water demand analysis conducted for the recently approved Multiple Cannabis Cultivation Facilities Programmatic Initial Study (Source 34). Indoor cannabis cultivation has a lower water demand, estimated to be 1.0 AFY of water per acre of cultivation, than the previous use of cut flower grow operations, estimated to be 3.6 AFY

per acre. Cannabis water requirements are based on Monterey County’s Agricultural Commissioner’s Office report that indoor cannabis grow operations require 0.25 AFY per 10,000 sf of canopy, equating to approximately 1.09 AFY of water per acre of cultivation (Source: 34). Cut flower water requirements are based on the 2014 Monterey County Water Resources Agency (MCWRA) Groundwater Extraction Summary Report, which states that groundwater is extracted from the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin at a rate of approximately 3.6 AFY per acre to support nursery operations (Source: 30). This crop replacement from cut flowers to indoor cannabis operations would decrease on-site water uses by up to 74 percent; as discussed in Section 10, Hydrology and Water Quality, this calculation relies upon the assumption that all of the greenhouses at the project sites were actively used for cut flower operation prior to cannabis cultivation. The actual reduction in water usage rate may be less than 74 percent, but would overall be less than existing uses (see Hydrology/Water Quality Section 10, 10b). Because the demand for water would decrease compared to prior cut flower use, adequate water supply infrastructure exists at the existing greenhouses to supply water to the proposed projects.

As discussed in Section II, Description of the Proposed Projects, the proposed projects currently and would continue to use existing on-site wells (or replacement well at 12/12 Genetics site) for water supply. The analysis provided herein determines that sufficient water supply is available to meet the water requirements associated with development of the project sites due to the conversion cultivation from other, more high intensity water use. However, in order to provide compliance with existing state regulations for the number of individuals utilizing any given water system, operation and maintenance of the project sites may require the establishment of a new public water system if the population with access to an existing domestic water supply exceeds 24 people per day for 60 days or more per calendar year. This is a threshold set by California Health and Safety Code (CH&SC), Division 104, Part 12, Chapter 4 (California Safe Drinking Water Act), Article 1, Section 116275(h), which defines a “public water system” as a system for the provision of water from human consumption through pipes or other constructed conveyances that has 15 or more service connection or regularly serves at least 25 individuals daily at least 60 days out of the year. Although cannabis cultivation would require less water than under existing conditions, depending on the size of the operation and number of daily employees, the water system may now qualify as a public water system and require a new or amended water system permit. The California Safe Drinking Water Act groups public water systems into multiple sub-classifications; of these, the proposed projects would typically classify as “nontransient noncommunity.” As defined in Section 116275(k), a nontransient noncommunity water system is a public water system that is not a community water system and that regularly serves at least 25 of the same persons over six months per year. Monterey County has a delegation agreement with the SWRCB to regulate public water systems that serve less than 20 connections, which includes development under the proposed projects. In summary, the proposed project would consume less water than existing operations but may require more people to be present on the project sites during the cultivation period, and this would trigger the requirement for the establishment of a new water system with Monterey County.

## WASTEWATER TREATMENT

Most of the unincorporated areas of Monterey County lack public sewer infrastructure and instead are serviced by either community septic systems or individual septic systems and leachfield disposal. All domestic sewage from the proposed projects would be contained in OWTS, also

referred to as septic systems. As discussed in Section 10, Hydrology and Water Quality, the project sites are currently developed, and existing septic systems are in operation. All proposed improvements would be required to comply with the County OWTS regulation as described in MCC 15.20, Sewage Disposal, as supplemented by the County's LAMP for OTWS.

Septic systems would be pumped as needed, depending on the number of employees at each site. Per MCC Section 15.20, septic wastewater is calculated at 15 gallons per day x 2 per person, and a leach field is sized at 0.3 gallons per square foot per day. Existing and proposed septic improvements including leach fields and septic tanks are shown in the project site plans (**Figures 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11**). Vendors would transport waste collected from the OWTS to a treatment plant with sufficient capacity for the waste, with which they have existing contracts to do so. The OWTS would not require wastewater treatment at an off-site facility.

### STORMWATER DRAINAGE

With the exception of the Coasta Bella project, the proposed projects would not result in changes to the existing drainage patterns at the sites as no new construction is proposed. No drainage improvements are necessary or proposed at this time. The proposed projects would involve inspecting and maintain the existing drainage culverts as necessary.

The proposed Coast Bella project would involve the construction of a stormwater retention pond in a disturbed area on the northern portion of the site (**Figure 3**). The proposed new buildings, paved parking spaces, and other improvements would result in an increase of approximately 50,000 sf of new impervious surface. In accordance with MCC Chapter 16.20.070, Runoff Control, the retention basin would be designed to control runoff from a 10-year storm. In addition, the proposed project would involve inspecting and maintaining the existing drainage culverts as necessary.

### ELECTRIC, NATURAL GAS, AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS:

As discussed in Section 6, Energy, natural gas and electricity at the project sites are provided by PG&E and CCCE. There are a variety of telecommunication (i.e., cable, internet, phone) providers (e.g., DISH, DirectTV, AT&T, Suddenlink, Xfinity, Spectrum) that could serve each of the project sites.

### SOLID WASTE

The Monterey Regional Waste Management District (MRWMD) provides solid waste service to the project sites. Solid waste materials would be transported to the Monterey Peninsula Landfill and Recycling Facility (MPL), located at 14201 Del Monte Boulevard in Marina. The MPL has a life expectancy of 100 years and has a total waste capacity of 5 million tons. The MPL is projected to reach capacity in 2115 (Source: 9).

As described in Section II, Description of the Proposed Projects, because trim would be sold to licensed manufacturers for extraction and used by the applicant for extraction, it is anticipated that there would be very little green waste. There would be no psychoactive waste contained in the green waste. Cannabis waste disposal procedures would comply with applicable provisions of

Bureau of Cannabis Control regulations generally set forth in Title 16, Division 42 of the CCR and applicable provisions of Division 30, Waste Management, of the PRC. In addition, pursuant to DCC regulations set forth in Title 4, Division 19 of the CCR, specifically sections 16309 and 17223, commercial cannabis cultivation operations must prepare a cannabis waste management plan, which may include composting cannabis waste. All composted cannabis waste would be done in compliance with Section 17850 et. seq. of Chapter 3.1 of Division 7 of Title 14 of the CCR. On-site composting is possible but not required for the project sites; most green waste would be hauled and disposed of off-site for composting at the landfill. The County also prohibits burning of cannabis waste on the project sites.

Solid waste, including food and other waste from on-site employees, would also be generated by the proposed projects.

## CONCLUSIONS:

### **19(a). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

The proposed projects involve the conversion of existing agricultural greenhouses and support structures to commercial cannabis use and construction of new cannabis facilities at one of the sites. The potential for the proposed projects to require new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities not included as part of the proposed projects is discussed below.

## WATER

As discussed in Section II, Description of the Proposed Projects, the proposed projects currently and would continue to use existing on-site wells (or replacement well at 12/12 Genetics site) for water supply. As described above, because the demand for water would decrease compared to prior cut flower use, adequate water supply infrastructure exists at the existing greenhouses to supply water to the proposed projects. However, in order to provide compliance with existing state regulations for the number of individuals utilizing any given water system, operation and maintenance of the project sites may require the establishment of a new public water system if the population with access to an existing domestic water supply exceeds 24 people per day for 60 days or more per calendar year.

The proposed projects would use existing or replacement infrastructure to the maximum extent feasible, and the establishment of a new water system, if necessary, would not necessarily require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water infrastructure. However, the proposed projects would implement separate water tanks and new domestic water lines to connect to the existing system, as described in Section II, Description of the Proposed Projects, and shown in **Figures 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11** (Source: 3, 39). These facilities would be consistent in design and construction activities with comparable water storage and conveyance facilities in the project area, and would not cause significant environmental effects. The proposed projects would ultimately decrease water use on the project sites, and potential impacts associated with infrastructure replacement and expansion to meet project water needs would be less than significant.

The proposed projects may also incorporate water treatment systems to meet primary drinking water standards specified by Title 22 of the California Health and Safety Code. Water treatment

processes produce wastewater (reject) water, which would be disposed of in accordance with ORDER WQ 2017-0023-DWQ, *General Waste Discharge Requirements and Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges of Waste Associated with Cannabis Cultivation Activities*, also referred to as the Cannabis General Order. Each of the proposed project are required to enroll in ORDER WQ 2017-0023-DWQ, which implements the SWRCB's *Cannabis Cultivation Policy: Principles and Guidelines for Cannabis Cultivation* (Source: 49). The Cannabis Cultivation Policy provides requirements for addressing waste discharges associated with cannabis cultivation. General Requirements and Prohibitions of the Cannabis Cultivation Policy include Item 27, which specifics that unless authorized by separate waste discharge requirements (WDRs), the Cannabis Cultivation General Order, or a CWA Section 404/401 permit, prohibited discharges include wastewater from cannabis manufacturing activities to an onsite wastewater treatment system (e.g., septic tank and associated disposal facilities) or to surface water or land. As noted, the proposed projects would be required to enroll in ORDER WQ 2017-0023-DWQ, which is the Cannabis General Order that implements the SWRCB's Cannabis Cultivation Policy, and provides General WDRs and Waiver of WDRs for cannabis operations. The Central Coast RWQCB has implementation authority on behalf of the SWRCB, for the Cannabis General Order.

Additional discussion regarding the sufficiency of water supplies to serve the proposed projects is provided under 19(b) below.

#### WASTEWATER TREATMENT

All domestic sewage from the proposed projects would be contained in OWTS. As discussed in Section 10, Hydrology and Water Quality, the project sites are currently developed, and existing septic systems are in operation. All proposed improvements would be required to comply with the County OWTS regulation as described in MCC 15.20, Sewage Disposal, as supplemented by the County's LAMP for OTWS.

It is assumed that septic systems would not be used beyond their operational capacity, and that wastewater generation would not exceed the operational capacity of a site's exiting OWTS. If it is determined over time that the number of employees at a given site may require new or expanded OWTSs, site-specific re-evaluation by a qualified professional may be required and expansion of an existing OWTS may occur, with the approval of the Monterey County Environmental Health Bureau (EHB). All OWTS permits issued by the EHB comply with the standards and specifications of MCC Chapter 15.20 and the County's LAMP. As a result, potential impacts associated with the replacement or expansion of OWTS due to increased employees on a project site would occur in compliance with applicable regulations. Due to compliance with regulatory requirements and oversight of the County EHB, potential impacts associated with wastewater treatment would be less than significant.

#### STORMWATER DRAINAGE

With the exception of the Coasta Bella project, the proposed projects would not result in changes to the existing drainage patterns at the sites as no new construction is proposed. No drainage improvements are necessary or proposed at this time. The proposed projects would involve inspecting and maintain the existing drainage culverts as necessary. Therefore, these projects

would not require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded stormwater facilities that would cause significant environmental effects.

In accordance with MCC Chapter 16.20.070, Runoff Control, the retention basin at the Coasta Bella site would be designed to control runoff from a 10-year storm. The proposed basin would be located in a disturbed area on-site. In addition, the proposed project would involve inspecting and maintaining the existing drainage culverts as necessary. The construction and maintenance of the retention pond would occur in compliance with applicable regulations. As a result, the proposed Coasta Bella project would not result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded stormwater facilities that would cause significant environmental effects.

### ELECTRICITY, NATURAL GAS, AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

As discussed in Section 6, Energy, natural gas and electricity at the project sites are provided by PG&E and CCCE, which have sufficient supplies for the proposed projects. There are a variety of telecommunication (i.e., cable, internet, phone) providers (e.g., DISH, DirectTV, AT&T, Suddenlink, Xfinity, Spectrum) that could serve each of the project sites. The proposed projects would not require new or expanded electricity, natural gas, or telecommunications infrastructure that would cause significant environmental effects.

Based on the discussions above, the proposed projects would not require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities that would cause significant environmental effects. This impact would be less than significant.

#### **19(b). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

Water supply for irrigation, processing, and domestic use would be provided by on-site wells (or replacement well at 12/12 Genetics site). The Coasta Bella, Gold Coast Gardens, and Coastal Farms sites are already connected to existing water systems, which would continue under each of the proposed projects. Domestic water for the Coasta Bella and Gold Coast Gardens sites is serviced by the PSMCSD, and irrigation and processing are served by an existing on-site well. The Coastal Farms site is served by permitted water system Aromas Rd WS #03. Irrigation, processing, and domestic water are served by this water system.

As discussed above in 19(a), if project operations provide access of an existing water system to more than 24 people per day for 60 days or more per calendar year, a new public water system may need to be permitted with the County on behalf of the SWRCB. Operation of the proposed project would require less water than existing uses on the project sites, and, therefore, the permitting of a new water system due to the number of people present on project sites would not introduce a significant or adverse impact to the environment.

All water supply to the project sites would be from groundwater in the Corralitos-Pajaro Valley Groundwater Basin. There is presently no legal limit to the amount of groundwater that may be pumped on the project sites. However, as compliance with SGMA continues through implementation of GPSs, groundwater monitoring, reporting, and extraction limits may be applied to certain areas. As noted, there is presently no such limit applicable to the proposed projects. A water demand analysis for the proposed projects is provided below.



## THRESHOLD

The General Plan EIR determined that implementation of the 2010 General Plan would increase demand for water up to the 2030 planning horizon, requiring new or expanded water facilities and new or expanded water entitlements. The EIR identified mitigation measures to provide additional water supply to the area, but due to the uncertainty over the success of mitigation requirements, impacts to water supply associated with General Plan build-out were determined to be significant and unavoidable (Source: 27). This means that the planned land uses development within the General Plan area, including the continued use of the project sites for agricultural purposes, may require more water than is anticipated to be available. As such, the proposed project would result in a significant impact to water supply if it would result in a net increase in water demand such that existing water use rates on the project sites are met or exceeded. This would be considered a potentially significant impact.

## WATER DEMAND ANALYSIS

Due to the lack of measured data for cannabis water use and the high degree of variability in estimates of cannabis water use, this analysis assumes that water demand rates would be comparable to those identified in the approved CEQA analyses for similar indoor cannabis grow operations, including the Seven Medical Marijuana Facilities Project located in the City of Greenfield (Monterey County) and the Dolny-Alabaster Project located in Arroyo Grande (San Luis Obispo County). These two approved operations were reported to have water demands of 0.89 AFY per acre (Source: 20) and 0.99 AFY per acre (Source: 36), respectively, for an average water demand of approximately 0.94 AFY per 10,000 sf of canopy, equating to approximately 1.09 AFY of water per acre of cultivation (Source: 34). The Agricultural Commissioner's Office further reports that based on anecdotal evidence provided by U.C. researcher Ted Grantham of the U.C. Berkeley Cannabis Research Center, an assumption of 1.0 AFY of water per acre of indoor cultivation is appropriate (Source: 34). Therefore, for the purposes of this analysis, it is assumed that indoor cannabis cultivation in Monterey County requires 1.0 AFY of water per acre of cultivation.

As described in 19(a), the proposed projects' water demand of 1.0 AFY per acre for indoor cannabis cultivation would be up to 74 percent lower than the water demand for cut flower cultivation in Monterey County (3.6 AFY per acre). As described in Section 10, Hydrology and Water Quality, this calculation is based upon the assumption that all project sites are or were actively used for cut flower operations prior to cannabis cultivation; this assumption realistically may over-estimate pre-cannabis water use rates, thereby also over-estimating the rate of reduction in water use that would occur with cannabis cultivation because some portions of the project sites may not be actively uses or may be used to a lesser extent than would occur under the proposed projects. However, this was used as a reasonable assumption to facilities the quantitative analysis provided herein. Overall, including with consideration to some margin of error associated with assumption for existing water use rates, the conversion of cut flower or other grow operations to cannabis cultivation would result in a net decrease in water demand. Given that the replacement of prior cut flower operations with cannabis operations is less water intensive, there is sufficient water supply available to support the proposed project.

No mitigation is required because the proposed projects would not result in a net increase in water demand compared to previous cut flower uses. However, in accordance with the SWRCB's Cannabis Cultivation Policy, each licensee for cannabis cultivation would be required to implement the following BMPs as part of their proposed project:

- Verification that the licensee has a legal right to the identified water source;
- No obstruction, alteration, damming, or diversion of all or a portion of a natural watercourse without notification and approval from CDFW under the Lake and Streambed Alteration Program;
- Regular inspection of the entire water delivery system for leaks and repair of leaky faucets and connectors as needed;
- Lining of water conveyance ditches/canals to reduce waste and the unreasonable use of water;
- Use of rainwater catchment systems to collect and store stormwater during the rainy season in tanks, bladders, or engineered ponds to reduce the need for water diversions and/or pumping of groundwater during low flow periods (late summer to fall);
- Use of float valves on water storage systems to keep them from overflowing onto the ground;
- Use of drip/irrigation systems; and
- Use of mulch to conserve soil moisture in cultivated areas, pots, and bins.

In addition, pursuant to MCC Chapter 21.67.050.B.8, water conservation measures would be implemented in order to minimize the use of water where feasible.

Implementation of the above BMPs, as required by the SWRCB's Cannabis Cultivation Policy, and MCC Chapter 21.67.050.B.8), would further reduce water demand from each of the proposed cannabis operations. If project operations would require the establishment of a new water system with the County due to the number of operational employees on site, potential impacts would be less than significant because overall water uses would continue to be less than under existing conditions. Similarly, if project operations require the use of a water treatment system, potential environmental impacts would be less than significant because all project operations would occur in compliance with the Cannabis General Order, which implements SWRCB's Cannabis Cultivation Policy and provides General WDRs and Waiver of WDRs for cannabis operations. Impacts would be less than significant.

**19(c): Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

Please refer to discussion under 19(a).

**19(d) and (e): Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

As described above, the MPL has a life expectancy of 100 years and has a total waste capacity of 5 million tons. The MPL is projected to reach capacity in 2115 (Source: 9).

Solid waste, including food and other waste from on-site employees generated by the proposed projects, would be disposed of at the MPL. As described in Section II, Description of the Proposed Projects, because trim would be sold to licensed manufacturers for extraction and used by the applicant for extraction, it is anticipated that there would be very little green waste. There would

be no psychoactive waste contained in the green waste. Cannabis waste disposal procedures must comply with applicable provisions of Bureau of Cannabis Control regulations generally set forth in Title 16, Division 42 of the CCR and applicable provisions of Division 30, Waste Management, of the PRC. In addition, pursuant to DCC regulations set forth in Title 4, Division 19 of the CCR, specifically sections 16309 and 17223, commercial cannabis cultivation operations must prepare a cannabis waste management plan, which may include composting cannabis waste. All composted cannabis waste would be done in compliance with Section 17850 et. seq. of Chapter 3.1 of Division 7 of Title 14 of the CCR. On-site composting is possible but not required for the project sites; most green waste would be hauled and disposed of off-site for composting at the landfill.

The proposed projects would not generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, negatively impact solid waste services, impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals. Additionally, the proposed projects would comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

<b>20. WILDFIRE</b>			Less Than Significant	
<b>If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:</b>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in the temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**DISCUSSION:**

Wildland fires are a major hazard in many areas of the County (Source: 27). Rugged topography, dry summers, and an abundance of fuel combine to make much of the County susceptible to wildfire fire hazards during the warmer seasons of the year. Much of the County is designated as a high or very high fire hazard area by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), with the exception of the Salinas Valley and Monterey Peninsula.

CAL FIRE prevents and suppresses wildfires in State Responsibility Area (SRA) lands, which are non-federal lands in unincorporated areas with watershed value, are of statewide interest, defined by land ownership, population density, and land use. The state mandates that CAL FIRE prepare Wildland Fire Hazard Maps for each county, rating fire hazards as low, moderate, high, or very high. These classifications are based on slope, climate, fuel loading (vegetation), and water availability. According to the CAL FIRE Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ) map, one of the proposed project sites is located within a Moderate FHSZ in an SRA: Coastal Farms (Source: 8). The other four project sites are not located in or near SRAs or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones. The Coastal Farms site is relatively flat with minimal fuel load. As discussed in Section IV, the sites are adequately served by the North County Fire Protection District and CAL FIRE.

The County Office of Emergency Services (OES) maintains and implements the County's emergency response plan, which includes a comprehensive disaster preparedness program. This project describes the organizational framework and respective duties of County department in order to coordinate separate departments into a cohesive unit during times of emergency.

## **CONCLUSIONS:**

### **20(a): Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

As discussed in 9(f), the implementation of the proposed projects would not result in modifications to San Juan Road or any other roadways, and no population growth would occur as part of the proposed projects as no new residences are proposed. Therefore, the proposed cannabis operations would not interfere with emergency response or emergency evacuation plans. Each of the project sites would comply with the MCC and Fire District standards for emergency response vehicles. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

### **20(b - d): Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

The proposed Coastal Farms site is located within a Moderate FHSZ SRA. It is relatively flat and developed with existing greenhouses and associated agricultural facilities. The proposed project would not involve the construction of any new, habitable structures. The proposed project would involve conversion of existing facilities for commercial cannabis operations and would not involve the construction of new structures. As a result, the proposed project would not exacerbate wildfire risk, expose people to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire, or require the installation or maintenance of infrastructure (e.g., roads, power lines, emergency water sources, etc.) that would exacerbate fire risk. As discussed in 7(aiv), the proposed project would not increase runoff, create slope instability, or result in drainage changes, and, therefore, would not expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides due to post-fire geologic conditions.

The facilities would be fully protected with automatic fire sprinkler systems, fire extinguishers, and alarm systems. Access roads would be constructed to provide a minimum width of 20 feet with an unobstructed vertical clearance not less than 15 feet to allow for emergency fire vehicles and equipment. The nearest waterway is the Pajaro River, approximately 350 feet. The proposed project would be subject to the Monterey County Fire Code, which identifies standard defensible space requirements (MCC Chapter 18.09). The MCC requires the removal of combustible vegetation from within a minimum of 100 feet or to the property line from structures, whichever

is closer. Additional or alternate fire protection approved by the fire code official may be required to provide reasonable safety. The proposed project would be subject to review and approval by the County and Fire District to ensure compliance with existing fire prevention regulations. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

21. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Does the project:</b>				
a) Have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**DISCUSSION/CONCLUSIONS:**

**21(a). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

Based on the analysis in this Initial Study, the proposed projects would not have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory. Compliance with standard County COA and DCC regulations would ensure impacts to cultural resources remain less than significant because they would require treatment, evaluation, and mitigation for previously undiscovered cultural resources, if encountered. All potential impact areas are deemed less than significant as identified in this Initial Study. Impacts would be less than significant.

**21(b). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

The proposed projects were determined to have no impact related to Mineral Resources, Population and Housing, Public Services, and Recreation. Therefore, as there would be no direct

or indirect impacts, the proposed projects would not contribute to cumulative impacts to these issue areas.

For all other issue areas, the proposed projects would have either indirect or direct impacts that have been determined to be less than significant, without mitigation incorporated. The proposed projects would not adversely affect biological, cultural, or other physical resources outside the project sites. Other impacts, such as noise and GHG emissions, would be minor and would not be cumulatively considerable. With the exception of Coasta Bella and Gold Coast Gardens, the five ~~projects~~sites are not in close proximity to each other, thereby further reducing the potential for cumulative impacts. While the proposed projects and other potential future cannabis facility projects are generally located in North Monterey County, the sites are not densely located in a manner that would cumulatively affect environmental resources. Thus, the effects of the proposed projects would not combine with impacts from other projects in the vicinity to result in a significant cumulative impact. Impacts would be less than significant.

**21(c). Conclusion: Less than Significant.**

The proposed projects themselves would not create environmental effects which would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly. Compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations, such as DCC regulations, MCC, wastewater discharge requirements, and hazardous materials compliance, would reduce potential adverse effects to human beings to a less-than-significant level. Impacts related to all issue areas that would impact humans would be less than significant.

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**Appendix A**  
**CalEEMod Outputs**

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**Appendix B**  
**Traffic Study and VMT Analyses**

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