



California Department of  
**Fish and Wildlife**

**CDFW News**

[MENU](#)

## TAG: MARIJUANA

# CDFW Awards \$1.3 Million for Restoration in Watersheds Impacted by Cannabis Cultivation

November 20, 2017

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife ([CDFW](#)) today announced the selection of four projects to receive funding for habitat restoration projects within California's Northern Coastal watersheds most impacted by unregulated cannabis cultivation.

The awards, totaling \$1.3 million, were made under CDFW's Cannabis Restoration Grant Program, and will support cleanup and habitat restoration at inactive cannabis cultivation sites.

"These grants mark an important step forward in our efforts to address the extensive damage to habitat and toxic chemicals threatening a host of wild species," CDFW Director Charlton H. Bonham said. "Providing a resource to address the impacts of reckless cannabis cultivation adds an important piece to the complex puzzle of our existing watershed restoration work."

Projects approved for funding through the Cannabis Restoration Grant Program include:

- Reclaiming our Public Lands and Watersheds from the Environmental Threats of Trespass Cannabis Cultivation (\$1,068,415 to Integral Ecology Research Center);
- Bull Creek Cannabis Recovery Project (\$94,510 to Eel River Watershed Improvement Group);
- SF Usal Creek Headwaters – Trash and Toxin Cleanup (\$83,840 to Eel River Watershed Improvement Group); and
- Whitethorn Grove Clean Up (\$64,831 to Sanctuary Forest, Inc.).

Projects funded under the 2017 Cannabis Restoration Program are scheduled to commence in early 2018.

The Cannabis Restoration Grant Program was established by CDFW in 2017 in response to legislation aimed at regulating the burgeoning legal cannabis industry. In his signing message to Assembly Bill 243 (Wood, Medical Marijuana), Governor Brown directed, "the Natural Resources Agency to identify projects to begin the restoration of our most impacted areas in the state."

"I have seen firsthand the devastation to the watersheds caused by these rogue cannabis growers," said Assemblymember Jim Wood, the author of AB 243. "They divert water, use prohibited herbicides and leave behind hundreds of butane canisters and chemical ponds that pollute our waterways affecting the salmon and trout populations. I am thankful that Governor Brown allocated \$1.5 million this year to kick off this very targeted restoration program for the North Coast area and look forward to the state identifying future funds so we can continue this critical work."

General information about CDFW's Cannabis Restoration Grant Program can be found at [www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Watersheds/Cannabis-Restoration-Grant](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Watersheds/Cannabis-Restoration-Grant).

# # #

**Media Contacts:**

**Matt Wells**, Watershed Restoration Grants Branch, (916) 445-1285

**Jordan Traverso**, CDFW Communications, (916) 654-9937

---

Share this:

Share

Tagged cannabis, grants, habitat restoration, marijuana

## CDFW Seeking Grant Proposals to Restore Habitat Impacted by Cannabis Cultivation

June 5, 2017

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife ([CDFW](#)) is now accepting proposals for habitat restoration projects within the California watersheds most impacted by unregulated cannabis cultivation.

Contingent on the Budget Act for Fiscal Year (FY) 2017-2018, a total of \$1.5 million in Timber Regulation and Forest Restoration funds will be made available through CDFW's Cannabis Restoration Grant Program. The program will focus on the North Coast watersheds extending from Sonoma County to the Oregon state line, as they have been most heavily impacted by cannabis cultivation.

"Existing damage to our watersheds due to unregulated cannabis cultivation is at crisis levels in terms of threats to habitat for aquatic and wildlife species," said CDFW

Director Charlton H. Bonham. “While many grow sites have been abandoned or shuttered, the infrastructure and ongoing damage remains. We are poised to initiate this critical and missing step in the process of decommissioning unwanted grow sites.”

California’s fish and wildlife are severely impacted by unregulated cannabis cultivation practices including unlawful water diversions for irrigation, conversion of lands, and prohibited herbicides, rodenticides and other environmental contaminants. The most impacted areas require immediate action. Assembly Bill 243 (Wood, Medical Marijuana) provides direction to CDFW to restore watersheds impacted by cannabis cultivation.

“Our beautiful, pristine North Coast forests have become havens for these rogue grow sites,” said Assemblymember Jim Wood, who represents five of the county areas eligible for these grants. “These sites have been ravaged by lethal chemicals, often-banned rodenticides which are used to keep animals away, but remain in the ground and eventually run off into rivers and streams, destroying everything in their path, including endangered fish species such as coho salmon. I am grateful that the Governor and CDFW are making these funds available for this much-needed cleanup.”

The FY 2017-2018 Proposal Solicitation Notice, application instructions and other information about the Restoration Grant Program are available at [wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Watersheds/Cannabis-Restoration-Grant](http://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Watersheds/Cannabis-Restoration-Grant).

Proposals must be submitted online at <https://soar.resources.ca.gov/>. The deadline to apply is Friday, June 30, 2017 at 4 p.m.

###

**Media Contacts:**

**[Matt Wells](#)**, CDFW Watershed Restoration Grants Branch, (916) 445-1285

**[Kirsten Macintyre](#)**, CDFW Communications, (916) 322-8988

---

Share this:

Share

Tagged cannabis, environment, grants, habitat restoration, marijuana

## CDFW and Partners Raid Santa Cruz County Marijuana Grow

July 21, 2014

Officers from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and other agencies arrested two suspects, cut down marijuana plants and removed hazardous materials from a Santa Cruz county waterway on July 15.



Acting on an anonymous tip on the CalTIP line, wildlife officers — with assistance from CAL FIRE, the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Department, the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Department and Santa Cruz County Code Enforcement — raided an illegal marijuana cultivation site in the upper reaches of the south fork of Vicente Creek off Robles Drive near Bonny Doon. The site had been set up on private property without the landowner's permission and was diverting water from the creek.

Officers arrested two male suspects and cut down and removed 180 fully mature marijuana plants with an approximate value of \$360,000. Officers also found and removed several pounds of hashish, fertilizer, dozens of butane canisters used to manufacture concentrated cannabis, and other harmful materials that cause direct damage to the environment of Vicente Creek. CDFW officers conducted a full reclamation of the site.

“These marijuana cultivation sites are not only illegal but the trash left behind causes tremendous damage to the environment,” said CDFW Assistant Chief Brian Naslund. “Our officers are working hard around the state to find and remove these cultivation sites, keep harmful chemicals from entering state waters and ensure public safety.”

Marijuana cultivation is becoming an increasing problem in California as the historic drought wears on.

“Illegal marijuana growers steal substantial amounts of water, exacerbating our severe drought conditions,” said Naslund. “Marijuana plants use six to eight gallons of water per plant, per day, and are a direct hazard to wildlife that eats the plants.”

Law enforcement officials are also concerned that that hikers and walkers could be in danger if they accidentally come across a marijuana cultivation site. Illegal growers often carry weapons.

The suspects were taken into custody and will be charged with multiple violations including streambed alteration, pollution and placement of hazardous materials on the property of another.

The lower Vicente Creek is the southernmost salmon stream in California. It is a historic waterway that supports both anadromous steelhead and endangered Central Coast Coho salmon.

CalTIP (Californians Turn In Poachers and Polluters) is a confidential secret witness program that encourages the public to provide CDFW with factual information leading to the arrest of poachers and polluters. If you witness a poaching or polluting incident or any fish and wildlife violation, or have information about such a violation, please call 1-888-DFG-CALTIP (888-334-2258), 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

**Media Contact:**

Lt. John Nores, CDFW Enforcement, (408) 591-5174

Andrew Hughan, CDFW Communications, (916) 322-8944



Share this:

Share

Tagged CalTIP, Law Enforcement, marijuana, marijuana cultivation, Northern California, Pollution, Santa Cruz, warden, wardens

## CDFW Team Investigates Major Trinity County Marijuana Cultivation Sites

September 6, 2013

**Sept. 6, 2013**

**Media Contact:** Warden Mark Michilizzi, CDFW Enforcement, (916) 651-2084







The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) participated in a multiagency narcotics task force that executed 23 search warrants in Trinity County on Aug. 29. All of the warrants were served in the Trinity Pines subdivision in the town of Hayfork.

The parcels were part of a long investigation conducted by the State Marijuana Investigation Team, Bureau of Land Management and Trinity County Narcotics Task Force, relating to illegal cultivation of marijuana for sale. Eight wildlife officers and six CDFW environmental scientists inspected nine of the 23 parcels for environmental crimes.

Violations found by the CDFW team include eight unlawful water diversions, 18 incidents of state water pollution, five violations of littering state waters, and multiple violations of the Clean Water Act and Porter Cologne Water Quality Act.

Some environmental violations involved the terracing of slopes above fish streams and other unpermitted construction that negatively impact stream banks, water quality and riparian zones through loss of natural habitat and uncontrolled water runoff. Large quantities of trash and plastic fertilizer bags were discarded throughout the parcels, creating environmental and wildlife hazards.

“What we observed on these parcels contributes to the cumulative impacts we see downstream including low stream flows, nutrient loading causing algae blooms, poor water quality and ultimately fish kills,” said CDFW Environmental Scientist Jane Arnold, who has been working environmental crime investigations associated with



illegal marijuana growing operations for several years. “These stream impacts are undermining decades of restoration and fish recovery efforts in the Trinity River watershed, and ultimately affect its wild and scenic character.”

CDFW’s Lt. Jackie Krug added that wardens and environmental scientists have been working together closely for several years to investigate environmental crimes associated with illegal marijuana growing operations. “This detail resulted in similar types of environmental crimes that we often see on these sites,” she said.

---

Share this:

Share

Tagged Bureau of Land Management, California, CDFW, Clean Water Act, environmental science, Hayfork, Law Enforcement, marijuana, Northern California, pot, public lands, streambed alteration, Trinity River, Water quality, wildlife

## Man Sentenced for Growing Marijuana in Cosumnes Wildlife Preserve

January 22, 2013

**Media Contact:** Warden Mark Michilizzi, CDFW Enforcement, (916) 651-2084

A Vallejo man was sentenced to two years and four months in jail for growing marijuana on public land.

On Aug. 4, 2012, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) officers located 19 separate growing locations with a total of approximately 2,000 marijuana plants in the Cosumnes River Ecological Preserve.



Oscar Javier Palomino Ocegueda, 29, was located inside the growing area and armed with a shotgun. He was taken into custody without incident. Ocegueda later pleaded no contest to felony marijuana cultivation charges and guilty to felony pollution charges. He was sentenced earlier this month in Sacramento County Superior Court.

Cleanup of the area required the removal of camping related and personal items, three generators, steel carts, gardening tools, two propane tanks and approximately 50 gallons of gasoline, 100 pounds of fertilizer, 200 bottles of water, 500 feet of electrical cord and 2,000 feet of plastic gardening pipe. Nine separate 400-500 pound helicopter loads were required to remove the material from the reserve.

Three firearms were located, resulting in the recovery of a firearm that had been reported stolen in 2008.

The wildlife officers received assistance from the Sacramento and San Joaquin county sheriff's departments, Galt Police Department and the California Highway Patrol (CHP).

The Cosumnes River Ecological Preserve encompasses and protects thousands of acres of wetlands that foster the growth of native vegetation and the wildlife dependent on those habitats. More than 250 bird species, 40 fish species, and 230 plant species have been identified on the Reserve. The CosumnesRiver preserve is recognized as one of California's most significant natural areas.

---

Share this:

Share

Tagged marijuana, marijuana cultivation

Search ...

## SUBSCRIBE

[SIGN UP FOR EMAIL DELIVERY](#)

Follow us on Twitter

[@CaliforniaDFW](#)

## BROWSE BY CATEGORY

Select Category 

## BROWSE BY DATE

Select Month 

## ARCHIVES

[2020](#) | [2019](#) | [2018](#) | [2017](#)

## TAGS

[Abalone](#) [abalone](#) [bear](#) [bears](#) [big game](#) [Calendar](#) [California](#) **California**

**Department of Fish and Wildlife** [California Fish and Game Commission](#) [California Wildlife Conservation Board](#)

[CalTIP](#) [CDFW](#) [Central California](#) [commercial fishing](#) [conservation](#) [crab](#)  
[Deer](#) [deer](#) [domoic acid](#) [Dungeness crab](#) [elk](#) [endangered species](#) [environment](#)  
[environmental grants](#) [fishery closure](#) [fishing](#) [fishing licenses](#) [online ALDS](#)  
[grants](#) [habitat](#) [habitat protection](#) [habitat restoration](#) [hatcheries](#) [Hatcheries](#)  
[hunter education](#) [hunting](#) [Law Enforcement](#) [License](#)  
[licenses](#) [lobster](#) [Marine Protected Areas](#) [news](#) [Northern](#)  
[California](#) [ocean poaching](#) [public comments](#) [public meeting](#)  
[Public Safety](#) [Rare and Endangered Species Preservation](#)  
[Recreation](#) [regulations](#) [report card](#) [Report Cards](#) [Sacramento Valley](#) [salmon](#)  
[Salmon](#) [San Francisco Bay Area](#) [science](#) [sea otters](#) [Southern](#)  
[California](#) [special hunts](#) [steelhead](#) [Sturgeon](#) [The Delta](#) [threatened species](#)  
[Trout](#) [trout](#) [upland game](#) [warden](#) [wardens](#) [waterfowl](#) [wildlife](#) [wild pig](#)  
[wild turkey](#) [workshops](#) [youth](#)

