MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 9, 2020

TO: Planning Commissioners and members of the public

FROM: Kim Hunter, Director of Planning

SUBJECT: Agenda Item 3 – Comments Received & Past Correspondence

Please see the attached two comments and past correspondence (letter and timeline) received from the applicant which were not included in the staff report.
This parcel is in our neighborhood. It is located at 240 Oliva Dr., Hayfork. We saw the posting about the owner of this property appealing denial of a permit for a cannabis cultivation license. We believe that this is an inappropriate location for a large commercial grow due to the following concerns:

1. Our neighborhood has limited water available from wells. We have spent $25,000 putting in a second well, since the first could not keep up with the drought and with overconsumption by the growers which surround us, the preponderance of which are illegal. Following that, we have been forced to haul in water for our household as the number of permitted and non permitted cannabis grows steadily increases. Most every grower in our neighborhood has had water delivered, since their wells were running dry due to overuse, which we believe is contrary to the requirement for legal cannabis growing.

2. We are also concerned by the transformation of single family homes into business concerns, thus depriving residents from obtaining housing, either to rent or buy. The parcel noted above has been cited and abated twice, and the owner now apparently wishes to explore the legal route after several years of non-permitted growing. We ask that you stop rewarding folks who have been operating illegal grows by licensing their efforts, especially after they have been cited.

3. If people require a variance for set backs to grow in a neighborhood, the parcel is too small to accommodate these grows. When we walk outside our home during the “season” we are overwhelmed with a staggering smell of cannabis, making spending time outside less than desirable. We have turned in complaints to the county; we have spoken with the neighbors, we have been assured that citations and injunctions have been issued, and yet the non-permitted growers around us persist, expand their grows, and conduct business as usual.

Please look at the larger impact of this land use for the communities in which it is occurring.

Hayfork

Sent from my iPad
December 8, 2020

Chair Frasier and Planning Commissioners,

Applicant SAKS N’ 8THS, LLC wishes to address the Appeal of Planning Director’s Decision to revoke Commercial Cannabis License CCL 624, Application No. P-20-30. Let this letter amend the initial appeal filed and paid for August 4, 2020 (Attachment A).

The application in question, CCL 624, has completed all current requirements as outlined in local and state laws. This site is in compliance with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife via a pending Lake and Stream bed Alteration Agreement, an issued Notice of Applicability from the State Water Resource Control Board’s General Order (Attachment B), and an issued Provisional Cultivation License from the California Department of Food and Agriculture (Attachment C) to which they were forced to pay for and have issued as the deadline for that state application payment fell around this appeal hearing. Additionally, this licensee also has their weighmaster certification, and is in the process of METRC registration and compliance.

The application in question was originally submitted November 12, 2019, with the application fee paid the same day (Attachment D). In December of 2019, former inspector Ben Morillas did the initial site inspection and verbally told the licensee “there’s no reason you won’t get a license.” In early 2020, Trinity County Planning Department determined the cultivation site in question was within the 350-foot setback noted in Trinity County Zoning Ordinance 17.43.050(A)(8). A variance application was submitted and paid for on February 12, 2020 (Attachment E), and a hearing not scheduled until June 8, 2020. Upon approval of the variance, it was confirmed by the Trinity County Planning Department that Mr. Ford’s license would be noticed and issued as soon as possible. Trinity County did not notice this license until July 15, 2020, approximately 40 days after the approval of the variance. The untimeliness of both the cultivation and variance application processing over the course of 8 months was and stands as one of the reasons for appealing this denied license.

It is not contested that the applicant received an abatement violation for cultivating while waiting during the timeline noted above for the final issuance of his license from Trinity County Planning Department. What is being contested is the revocation of this applicant’s license with no pictures or site visit notes to prove the applicant was cultivating illegally for a second time, as the county states in their staff report. In the Staff Report, evidence given to deny this appeal is
spare, and does not fulfill the burden of proof the county has to show this license was not in compliance. The only pictures provided of plants in the ground is from the Sheriff’s citation to which, as stated, this applicant does not contest, and in fact agrees they complied by self-abating within the 7-day period. Additionally, the email in the county’s Staff Report from inspector Jeff Dickey states that this license was to be noticed and issued provisionally. The next communication received from the county was the notice of revocation of the license before the noticing period was finished. Clearly, county staff has not obtained the proper evidence to prove this applicant was continuing to cultivate after the initial citation.

The fact that this licensee is in full compliance with both local and state agencies, along with the lack of timeliness in processing and the lack of proof that cultivation continued after the June citation, warrants an argument that this appeal should be granted, the county’s decision to revoke this license be overturned, and consequently this license be issued once more provisionally.

We thank this Commission for their time and consideration to allowing a local business to continue to comply and operate this coming season.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Ana Wright
Executive Vice President
Flowra
ana@theflowraplatform.com
M: (530) 739-9908
O: (800) 811-4356, ext 502
Trinity County Planning Department  
61 Airport Road PO Box 2819  
Weaverville, CA 96093

Receipt Number: PL2020-00064

ATTACHMENT A

Payer/Payee: FLOWRA  
790 MAIN ST BLDG 620 PO BOX 172  
WEAVERVILLE CA 96093

Cashier: Mary Beth Brinkley  
Date: 08/04/2020

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Total Paid: $500.00
May 14, 2019

SAKS N’ THS LLC
ATTN: COLBY FORD
PO BOX 219
WEAVERVILLE, CA 96093

Subject: Notice of Applicability - Waste Discharge Requirements
Water Quality Order WQ 2019-0001-DWQ

The attached Notice of Applicability provides notice that the requirements of the State Water Board Cannabis Cultivation Policy- Principles and Guidelines for Cannabis Cultivation (Policy), and the General Waste Discharge Requirements and Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges of Waste Associated with Cannabis Cultivation Activities, Order WQ 2019-0001-DWQ (General Order – previously WQ 2017-0023-DWQ, with updates and revisions effective April 16, 2019) are applicable to the site as described below. Based on the information provided, the Discharger self-certifies the cannabis cultivation activities are consistent with the requirements of the State Water Board Policy and General Order.

Please direct all submittals, discharge notifications, and questions regarding compliance and enforcement to the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board Cannabis Program at (707) 576-2676 or northcoast.cannabis@waterboards.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Matthias St. John
Executive Officer
North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board
NOTICE OF APPLICABILITY – WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS, WATER QUALITY ORDER WQ 2019-0001-DWQ, SAKS N’ THS LLC, TRINITY COUNTY APN(s) 014-290-01-00

Saks N’ ths LLC (hereafter “Discharger”) submitted information through the State Water Resources Control Board’s (State Water Board’s) online portal on November 11, 2018, for discharges of waste associated with cannabis cultivation related activities. Based on the information provided, the Discharger self-certifies the cannabis cultivation activities are consistent with the requirements of the Policy and General Order. This letter provides notice that the Policy and General Order are applicable to the site as described below. You are hereby assigned waste discharge identification (WDID) number 1_53CC406224.

The Discharger is responsible for all the applicable requirements in the Policy, General Order, and this Notice of Applicability (NOA). This includes making any necessary changes to the enrollment, and the Discharger is the sole person with legal authority to make those changes. The Discharger will be held liable for any noncompliance with the Policy, General Order, and the NOA.

1. FACILITY AND DISCHARGE DESCRIPTION
The information submitted by the Discharger states the disturbed area is equal to or greater than 2,000 square feet and less than 1 acre (43,560 square feet) no portion of the disturbed area is within the setback requirements, no portion of the disturbed area is located on a slope greater than 30 percent, and the cannabis cultivation area is less than or equal to 1 acre.

Based on the information submitted by the Discharger, the cannabis cultivation activities are classified as Tier 1 Low Risk.

2. SITE-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS
The Policy and General Order are available on the Internet at: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cannabis/cannabis_water_quality.html

The Discharger shall ensure that all site operating personnel know, understand, and comply with the requirements contained in the Policy, General Order, this NOA, and the Monitoring and Reporting Program (MRP, Attachment B of the General Order). Note that the General Order contains standard provisions, general requirements, and prohibitions that apply to all cannabis cultivation activities.

The application requires the Discharger to self-certify that all applicable Best Practicable Treatment or Control (BPTC) measures are being implemented, or will be implemented by the onset of the winter period (November 15 - April 1), following the enrollment date. Landowners of the cultivation site in the North Coast Region are required to submit and implement Site Management Plans that describes how BPTC measures are implemented property-wide, including BPTC measures implemented to address discharges from legacy activities (e.g. former timber harvest, road building, mining, etc.) at the site per Provision C.1.a. of the General Order. Dischargers that cannot implement all applicable BPTC measures by the onset of the winter period, following their enrollment date, shall submit to the appropriate Regional Water Board a Site Management Plan that includes a time schedule and scope of work for use by the Regional Water Board in developing a compliance schedule as described in Attachment A of the General Order.
During reasonable hours, the Discharger shall allow the State Water Board or Regional Water Board (collectively Water Boards), California Department of Fish and Wildlife, CAL FIRE, and any other authorized representatives of the Water Boards upon presentation of a badge, employee identification card, or similar credentials, to:

i. enter premises and facilities where cannabis is cultivated; where water is diverted, stored, or used; where wastes are treated, stored, or disposed; or in which any records are kept;
ii. access and copy, any records required to be kept under the terms and conditions of the Policy and General Order;
iii. inspect, photograph, and record audio and video, any cannabis cultivation sites, and associated premises, facilities, monitoring equipment or device, practices, or operations regulated or required by the Policy and General Order; and

iii. sample, monitor, photograph, and record audio and video of site conditions, any discharge, waste material substances, or water quality parameters at any location for the purpose of assuring compliance with the Policy and General Order.

3. TECHNICAL REPORT REQUIREMENTS
The following technical report(s) shall be submitted by the Discharger as described below:

A Site Management Plan, by February 08, 2019, consistent with the requirements of General Order Provision C.1.a., and Attachment A, Section 5. Attachment D of the General Order provides guidance on the contents of the Site Management Plan.

A Site Closure Report must be submitted 90 days prior to permanently ending cannabis cultivation activities and seeking to rescind coverage under the General Order. The Site Closure Report must be consistent with the requirements of General Order Provision C.1.e., and Attachment A, Section 5. Attachment D of the General Order provides guidance on the contents of the Site Closure Report.

4. MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM
The Discharger shall comply with all provisions of the Monitoring and Reporting Program (MRP), which appears as Attachment B to the General Order. The Discharger shall also comply with all provisions of the North Coast Regional Supplement to Annual Monitoring and Reporting Requirements for Statewide Cannabis General Order WQ 2017-0023-DWQ (Regional Supplement), which independently appears as Investigative Order No. R1-2019-0023, issued by the Regional Water Board Executive Officer on March 22, 2019. Annual reports for both sets of requirements shall be submitted to the Regional Water Board in a combined report by March 1 following the year being monitored. The Discharger shall not implement any changes to the MRP or to the Regional Supplement unless and until a revised MRP or Regional Supplement is issued by the Regional Water Board Executive Officer or the State Water Board Division of Water Quality Deputy Director, or the State Water Board Chief Deputy Director.

A copy of Attachment B to the General Order can be obtained online at the following location, or by contacting staff at the phone number and email address listed below.

A copy of the Regional Supplement can be obtained online at the following location, or by contacting staff at the phone number and email address listed below.
5. ANNUAL FEE
According to the information submitted, the discharge is classified as Tier 1 Low Risk with the current annual fee assessed at $600. The fee is due and payable on an annual basis until coverage under this General Order is formally rescinded. To rescind coverage, the Discharger must submit a Notice of Termination, including a Site Closure Report at least 90 days prior to termination of activities and include a final MRP report.

6. TERMINATION OF COVERAGE UNDER THE GENERAL ORDER & REGIONAL WATER BOARD CONTACT INFORMATION
Cannabis cultivators that propose to terminate coverage under the Conditional Waiver or General Order must submit a Notice of Termination (NOT). The NOT must include a Site Closure Report (see Technical Report Requirements above), and Dischargers enrolled under the General Order must also submit a final monitoring report. The Regional Water Board reserves the right to inspect the site before approving a NOT. Attachment C of the General Order includes the NOT form and Attachment D of the General Order provides guidance on the contents of the Site Closure Report.

If the Discharger cannot comply with the General Order, or will be unable to implement an applicable BPTC measure contained in Attachment A by the onset of the winter period each year, the Discharger shall notify the North Coast Regional Cannabis Unit staff at (707) 576-2676 or northcoast.cannabis@waterboards.ca.gov so that a site-specific compliance schedule can be developed.

Cc: Kevin Porzio, State Water Resources Control Board, dwq.cannabis@waterboards.ca.gov
    Adam McKannay, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, adam.mckannay@wildlife.ca.gov
    Cheri Sanville, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, cheri.sanville@wildlife.ca.gov
    Leslie Hubbard, Trinity County Planning Department, lhubbard@trinitycounty.org
    Kristy Anderson, Trinity County Environmental Health, kanderson@trinitycounty.org
PROVISIONAL CANNABIS CULTIVATION LICENSE

Legal Business Name:
SAKS N' 8THS LLC

Main Premises APN:
Trinity County - 014-290-01-00

Main Premises Address:
240 Olivo Dr
Unincorporated, CA 96041

Valid:
12/04/2020 to 12/04/2021

License Number:
CCL20-0000972

License Type:
Adult-Use-Small Mixed-Light Tier 1

--- PROVISIONAL LICENSE PURSUANT TO BPC 26050.2 ---

Additional Premises APN(s):

Additional Premises Address(es):

--- NON-TRANSFERABLE ---

Page 1 of 1

--- POST IN PUBLIC VIEW ---
## ATTACHMENT D

Trinity County Cannabis Division  
61 Airport Road PO Box 2819  
Weaverville, CA 96093

Receipt Number: CA2019-00470

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PO BOX 172  
WEAVERVILLE CA 96093

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To whom it may concern,

Tuesday, July 28, 2020

First of all thanks for taking the time to read this. My name is Colby Ford, the owner of 240 Oliva Dr. Hayfork, Ca 96041 (APN: 014-290-001-000). A little about myself, I'm a 37 year old married father and entrepreneur. I have lived in Trinity county for five years now. In that time I've opened two local businesses, called You've Got Mail, in Hayfork & Weaverville. Within 1 year of purchasing my place my property value dropped almost half. For that reason I saw a commercial cannabis license as a way to add equity back into my property.

So in December 2018 I made the decision to hire a consultant company Flowra. Which I thought at the time was the best plan seeing how they were "professionals at filing cannabis applications". Hiring them meant I had to use a lot of my savings. I hired them to help guide me through the process and to do everything by the book. I hired a company so there were no misunderstandings through this entire process. Unfortunately through this process there has been many misunderstandings and misfilings on Flowra's part. After a years time and many employees handling my license application, I finally had my site inspection on December 20, 2019.

At the time Ben Morillas was doing the inspections, he spent several hours measuring and instructing me on the do's & don't. He instructed me on size limitations and areas that I would be able to build in. We talked about how I was already far into my savings with this project. I asked him, "knowing the amount of money it would cost to build my project, Are you sure I will be able to plant in 2020?" He replied "Colby, you are way ahead of everyone else and you have everything done. If I were you I would start building. The only thing I need from you is to make some changes to your site map & you need a variance. I asked him about how long a variance would take? He replied, "We are 2-3 months out on variance", that was in December 2019.

The day after he left I started the build on my project. I worked day in and day out, while still running 2 businesses and taking care of my family.

Once March 2020 rolled around and I still hadn't heard one word on a variance, I emailed Bella. She let me know that due to COVID-19 there were not any tentative dates to have hearings. Which I completely get and understand the severity. So I emailed her back asking if we could do these hearings through online video chat (Zoom). Or if I even needed a hearing being that I had letters of support from both neighbors whom were within the 350' canopy setback. Also asking if its possible to receive the $750 variance fee back until hearings re-opened. To my surprise I never received a response email.

When May of 2020 came about and we still have yet been given a date for a variance. I really started to worry. Because at this time I had sunk all my savings and loans from family into this project, with still no tentative date to start my business. With these worries came the fear of bankruptcy, especially with the coronavirus still going on. So I started asking around to other people in my predicament and to my consultant. All of which said that the county wasn't going to be messing with people who were already in the process of getting their license. So I planted. Boy were they wrong. Within a week of planting I was issued an abatement. Which scared the bejesus out of me. I immediately spent days ripping out what I worked so hard to create.
After that I received a call from Jeff Dickey, July 9, 2020, while I was out of state on vacation with the family. Letting me know that they decided to reverse the previous decision of denial. I was ecstatic! So excited I sent a text to my workers back in Hayfork. Telling them, “Congrats guys, got a call WE WERE APPROVED!!” When I told them we were approved they assumed that meant we received our license. So without my instruction they replanted our beds. I got home the night of July 19th around midnight. On July 20th woke up to see all the beds were planted as did Jeff Dickey when he drove by that very day. To know I was only 4 days from getting my county license which is the only thing the state is waiting on to issue me a state license, is to say the less very deflating. I worked and put so much effort into this, not to mention the money it costed. To have it all thrown away on a bonehead move made on my part. I can’t change what has been done but try to help you understand where I made my mistake.

I urge and plea to you. Please understand that I in no way wanted to make a mockery of the process. My actions were inexcusable and were made during a very strange time in our nation’s history.

Colby Ford
**Timeline of events**

**December 2018** - HIred Flowra and started intake of necessary info

**January 9, 2019** - I acquired sellers permit and Tax number for LLC

**March 26, 2019** - Flowra started the creation of the site map

**May 21, 2019** - John Wright (Flowra) is still working on site map needing info on water storage locations

**April 3, 2019** - Flowra needs more info to finish site maps

**April 15, 2019** - Had to file 1st Cannabis Tax with CDTFA

**May 23, 2019** - Received Notice of Applicability verifying enrollment with North Coast waterboard

**May 23, 2019** - Engineer Jess Gregory visited my site to assess potential compliance efforts to satisfy CDFW

**June 1, 2019** - I request Flowra to move forward with Jess Gregorys ($5600 engineering proposal)

**June 7, 2019** - Site Management Plan is complete and ready for pick up from Flowra

**June 13, 2019** - Lisa (Flowra) asks me again through email if I wanted to move forward with engineer and that 50% deposit is required for him to start

**June 21, 2019** - I inform Lisa a 2nd time that Id like to move forward with engineering of pond

**August 20, 2019** - Flowra asks to do a intake to gather necessary info (2nd time)

**Sep 9, 2019** - Septic system pumped

**Sept 27, 2019** - Both neighbors signed variance support letter

**October 16, 2019** - Storkman Plumbing performs Well Flow Test

**October 22, 2019** - Paid for Surety Bond

**October 29, 2019** - Flowra Changes my account manager from Andrea to Melissa

**December 12, 2019** - CDFW Incomplete notification of Lake or Streamed Alteration

**December 20, 2019** - Ben Morillas visited site. (Site Inspection) stated I would be able to plant in 2020 because I was way ahead of everyone and said I should begin building my project.
January 24, 2020- Ben sends email showing me all I was lacking and findings from site inspection performed a month ago (Variance & site map)

January 24, 2020- Ana Wright (Flowra) emailed me that variance application was submitted a week prior.

February 6, 2020- Flowra informed me that Fish & Wildlife asked for a Biological assessment and that their team could handle it and have it done on Feb. 12th at 10am.

February 10, 2020- After waiting two weeks for Flowra, I amended site map on my own and emailed to Ben Morillas

February 12, 2020- Flowra’s Team for Biological assessment (Miranda) did not show.

February 14, 2020- Paid for the supposed Biological assessment done by Miranda (Flowra’s Recommendation) on 2/10/20.

February 18, 2020- Ben emailed more corrected changes I needed to make to site map. Finished site map with Ben through a series of emails that day.

February 26, 2020- Received email from Division of water rights, requesting incomplete info

February 28, 2020- I called division of water rights Darin Clark & resolved incomplete info myself

March 24, 2020- Emailed Bella in regards to why variance had not yet been scheduled

March 24, 2020- Bella emailed me back stating they weren’t having hearings due to COVID-19

April 4, 2020- Emailed Bella back about variance stating Id like my money back until they are ready to start doing variance hearings again and also if a video conference hearing is possible (Zoom) Also asked why a variance hearing is needed if I have supporting letters from neighbors that are affected by 350’ canopy setbacks. NEVER RECEIVED A RESPONSE EMAIL.

May 14, 2020- email from CDFW stating we are still in need of a biological assessment

May 14, 2020- Lisa notifies me that the assessment supposedly done back in February was never completed

May 27, 2020- Daniel Marvel visits site to get measurements and info that was not obtained by Ben Morillas on original site inspection back in Dec. 2019.

June 5, 2020- Order by Sheriffs department officer Barcelona to abate plants within 7 days

June 12, 2020- Had all beds pulled after several days of work

June 11, 2020- Variance Hearing & was passed unanimously by all board members (6 months after initial application)
June 11, 2020 - CDFA emailed saying there were deficiencies on my application that needed to be corrected

June 15, 2020 - Pine crest does biological test. Flowra paid for it because Miranda never came out in February like previously stated. (4 month delay)

June 15, 2020 - Changed account manager from Melissa to Nicole

June 15, 2020 - Nicole resubmitted owner application CDFA deficiencies because prior account manager filled it out wrong. (Delays) Tuesday, July 28, 2020

June 18, 2020 - Was denied my license

July 9, 2020 - Jeff Dickey called me while I was on vacation out of state that the denial was reversed and I would be getting my license.

July 10, 2020 - Text my workers back home, “Congrats guys we were approved” (Had to text cause where I was staying in Grand Lake, CO had terrible reception.)

July 12, 2020 - Workers planted without my knowledge because they assumed my text meant we had received our license

July 17, 2020 - APN is in the Trinity Journal informing public of my acceptance in Commercial Cannabis program.

July 19, 2020 - Returned home from vacation late around midnight

July 20, 2020 - Jeff Dickey confirms that plants were planted

July 23, 2020 - Email receiving revocation letter

July 24, 2020 - Day I was suppose to receive my county license :(