

Updated Project Description – Wellness Ranch 3

October 2024

The Wellness Ranch Cannabis Cultivation project is located at 6751 Ridge Road, Lakeport.

Outdoor and indoor cannabis cultivation is authorized under the Lake County Zoning Ordinance, within the RL - Rural Lands Zoning District, subject to approval of a Major Use Permit.

Technical documents have been prepared in support of the proposed Wellness Ranch 3 Cannabis Cultivation project, initially submitted in October 2023. Included with the Major Use Permit Application was the Supplemental Questionnaire, Project Description, Property Management Plan, Biological Report, Site Management Plan, Cultural Resources Report, Nitrogen Management Plan, Water Quality BMP's, Site Plans, Ground Water Hydrology Report, Drought Management Plan, and related required documentation.



Wellness Ranch Location Map – 6751 Ridge Road - Lakeport

The Wellness Ranch 3 Cannabis Cultivation project is proposed on an existing 106.5-acre parcel, at 6751 Ridge Road in Lakeport (APN 007-045-16), located southwest of Lakeport and Highland Springs Reservoir.

The approved Wellness Ranch cannabis cultivation project includes:

- Grow site 1 – existing 10,000 square foot fenced/gated outdoor garden.
- Grow site 2 – existing 10,000 square foot fenced/gated outdoor garden.
- Grow site 3 – existing 2,500 square foot indoor garden within barn.
- Residence - one (1) existing single-family dwelling.
- Various existing farm storage, processing, and service facilities, including existing wells and water storage tanks, a hoop house for immature plants, 3 - 40' drying containers, 1 - 40' storage container, 1 - 8'x12' Pesticide/fertilizer storage shed, an ADA accessible toilet, security cameras/equipment, on site vehicle circulation and parking areas, trash storage bins, green waste composting/soil storage areas.

Project Description

A Major Use Permit application (UP 23-08) for the purpose of expanding the cannabis cultivation area/facilities was submitted in October of 2023 (updated in April and October of 2024 and March of 2025). The proposed Wellness Ranch 3 Cannabis Cultivation project is depicted on updated site plans prepared by Gregory Engineering, Inc.(March 2025).

The subject project has modified to reduce the request for new outdoor canopy from 130,680 square feet (sf) to 87,120 sf and increase the request for new indoor cultivation canopy from 2,400 sf to 6,420 sf. Below is the summary of existing (already approved) cultivation and new cultivation:

1) Total Outdoor Canopy, upon approval of UP 23-08:

- a. 10,000 sf at Site 1 (approved)
- b. 97,120 sf at Site 2 (10,000 sf approved, 87,120 sf new)

2) Total Indoor Canopy, upon approval of UP 23-08:

- a. Within the existing 2,400 sf barn: two tiers of canopy within 90% of the floor area to allow for aisles = 90% of 4,800 sf = 4,320 sf (2,400 sf is already approved)
- b. Within the proposed 2,500 sf barn: two tiers of canopy within 90% of the floor area to allow for aisles = 90% of 5,000 sf = 4,500 sf Thus, upon approval UP 23-08, at buildout, there will be a total of 107,120 sf of outdoor canopy (20,000 sf approved and 87,120 sf new) and 8,820 sf of indoor canopy (2,400 sf approved and 6,420 sf new).

- Stage 2 – 2,500 square feet Processing Building to replace the 7 shipping containers after year 3.
- Various proposed farm storage, processing, and service facilities.

In addition to the above, revised site plans (March 2025) depict the project development plans for the Wellness Ranch project including the following:

- An existing single-family dwelling.
- Water wells and irrigation system.
- Water storage tanks.
- Immature plants hoop house.
- Six (6) - 40' shipping containers for drying.
- One (1) - 40' shipping container for processing of on-site product.
- Stage 2 processing building to replace the shipping containers after year 3.
- One (1) - 8'x12' Pesticide/fertilizer storage shed.
- One (1) ADA accessible toilet to be replaced with ADA compliant restroom within Stage 2 processing building.
- Security cameras/equipment.
- On site vehicle driveways, circulation system, and parking areas.
- Trash storage bins.
- Green waste composting/soil storage areas.

Outdoor cultivation will be conducted in fabric bags and/or tilled native soil with amendments.

Indoor cultivation will be tiered, in pots/containers, under grow lights.

Ground water from existing wells will be pumped into several water tanks above Grow site 2, an existing tank above the house and existing tanks at Grow site 1. Drip systems will be used to irrigate plants.

A fertilizer mixing tank will be set up at each garden site to deliver liquid fertilizer such as compost tea to the plants.

Cannabis drying and storage/processing will take place on site within the shipping containers and then after year 3 will be transitioned to the proposed processing building. The stage 2 processing building will be a comparable size and in the same location as the shipping containers.

Access to the property will be from Ridge Road via two (2) 20' wide driveways, with one serving the house, the indoor cultivation facilities, and the Grow site 1 area. The other driveway serves the Grow site 2 facilities. The driveways will have street addresses posted, a road base/gravel surface, and turnouts in compliance with PRC 4290.

Minor Use Permits for the existing cultivation areas and site improvements have been approved by the County and have recently passed the annual on-site inspection by County CDD staff.

The Wellness Ranch parcel is located on the west side of Ridge Road, an unpaved County roadway maintained by the nearby property owners.

The proposed new 2-acre cultivation area is on a sloping south facing hillside that is open grass land with scattered Blue Oak trees around the perimeter. No oak trees will be removed; however some trees will be trimmed to facilitate cultivation activities and vehicle access.

The Wellness Ranch site is located within the Mayacamas Mountains - North Coast Range. This region of Northern California has a Mediterranean-type climate, characterized by hot, dry summers and wet, moderately cold winters. The site is in Climate Zone 7 - California's Gray Pine Belt.

The topography of the site is mountainous and consists of the upper Donovan Valley and a side canyon. The ground surface elevation of the property ranges from approximately 1,760 feet to 2,100 feet above sea level. Two small seasonal creeks extend through the site, one running north to south through the center and the other is parallel to Ridge Road.

The subject land was part of a cattle grazing ranch and was largely undeveloped except for a partially built barn until 2017. A well was drilled in 2017 and the house and barn were completed in 2019. A stock pond in the center of the site was approved and constructed in 2019. An additional water well supply was drilled recently.

Lake County General Plan

The 6751 Ridge Road property (APN 007-045-16) is designated by the Lake County General Plan as Rural Lands. The purpose of this land use category per the General Plan is to “allow rural development in areas that are primarily in their natural state and the category is appropriate for areas that are remote.

Lake County Zoning Ordinance

The subject property is zoned RL- Rural Lands District. According to Article 7, Section 7 of the Lake County Zoning Ordinance, the purpose of this Zoning District is to provide for resource related and residential uses of the County’s undeveloped lands that are remote and often characterized by steep topography, fire hazards, and limited access.

Section 27 - Table A of the County Zoning Ordinance indicates that outdoor and indoor cannabis cultivation facilities are permitted within the RL Zoning District subject to approval of a Major Use Permit.

Conformance with Lake County Cannabis Cultivation Regulations

The following evaluation of the Lake County Zoning Ordinance, including the cannabis cultivation regulations, provides information indicating that the subject site and proposed cannabis cultivation facilities are in conformance with the applicable County Ordinances. The **Suggested Findings** are in response to applicable Zoning provisions (**bold text/underlined**) and provide a nexus with the County Ordinances and the project’s Site Plans, Project Description, Property Management Plan and operational details, in support of findings that the project is in compliance with applicable County regulations.

A person interested in applying for a cannabis cultivation use permit shall be enrolled with the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board or State Water Resources Control Board for water quality protection programs as of the effective date of this ordinance or written verification from the appropriate board that enrollment is not necessary.

Applicant’s Response and Suggested Findings:

In compliance, the Wellness Ranch project is enrolled in the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board as of March 2019 WDID # 5S17CC409594.

Applicants shall schedule and pay the fee for a pre-application conference with the Department prior to the submittal of an application for a use permit.

Applicant’s Response and Suggested Findings:

In compliance, Wellness Ranch applied for and completed the Lake County Community Development Department pre-application process in March 2019.

Permit application supplemental information.

Applicant's Response and Suggested Findings:

In compliance, Wellness Ranch has completed and submitted the Lake County Use Permit Application Supplemental Data Questionnaire.

Project description: The project description shall provide adequate information to evaluate the impacts of the proposed project and consists of three parts: a site plan, written description section, and a property management section.

Applicant's Response and Suggested Findings:

In compliance, Wellness Ranch has prepared and submitted an updated Project Description, Property Management Plan, and related documentation.

Site Plan: A site plan is a graphic representation of the project consisting of maps, site plans, or drawings prepared by a design professional consistent with the requirements of the Department pursuant to Article 55.5.

Applicant's Response and Suggested Findings:

In compliance, see attached updated site plans dated September 2024.

Written Description: A written section which shall support the graphic representations and shall, at a minimum, include:

(a) A project description.

(b) The present zoning.

(c) A list and description of all uses shown on the site plan.

(d) A development schedule indicating the approximate date when construction of the project can be expected to begin and be completed for each phase of the project; including the permit phase.

(e) A statement of Wellness Ranch's proposal for solid waste disposal, vegetative waste disposal, storm water management, growing medium management, fish and wildlife protection, water resources protection, energy use, water use, pest management, fertilizer use, property management, grading, organic farming, and protection of cultural resources.

(f) Quantitative data for the development including but not limited to:

Gross and net acreage; the approximate dimensions and location of structures for each district or area; employee statistics; support services required; traffic generation data based on anticipated uses; parking and loading requirements; and outdoor storage requirements based on anticipated uses.

Applicant's Response and Suggested Findings:

In compliance, this Project Description includes the current General Plan and Zoning information. The County Application Form - Supplemental Questionnaire sheets include a development schedule.

The Property Management Plan addresses and describes a wide array of operational procedures and provides information regarding the Wellness Ranch's procedures for solid waste disposal, vegetative waste disposal, storm water management, growing medium management, fish and wildlife protection, water resources protection, energy use, water use, pest management, fertilizer use, property management, grading, organic farming, and protection of cultural resources.

Information concerning overall project size, land use sizes, dimensions and location of facilities and structures, employee statistics, support services, traffic and on-site circulation, parking and loading facilities, and outdoor storage is also provided.

Property Management Plan: All permittees shall prepare a Property Management Plan. The intent of said plan is to identify and locate all existing cannabis and non-cannabis related uses on the property, identify and locate all proposed cannabis and non-cannabis related uses on the property, and describe how all cannabis and non-cannabis related uses will be managed in the future. The property management plan shall demonstrate how the operation of the commercial cannabis cultivation site will not harm the public health, safety, and welfare or the natural environment of Lake County.

Applicant's Response and Suggested Findings:

In Compliance, Wellness Ranch has prepared and submitted the updated Phase 3 Property Management Plan (October 2024).

Major Use Permit Suggested Findings - Article 51, of the Lake County Zoning Ordinance:

(a) The Lake County Planning Commission may only approve or conditionally approve a Major Use Permit if all the following findings are made:

1. **That the establishment, maintenance, or operation of the use applied for will not under the circumstances of the particular case, be detrimental to the health, safety, morals, comfort and general welfare of the persons residing or working in the neighborhood of such proposed use or be detrimental to property and improvements in the neighborhood or the general welfare of the County.**

Applicant's Response and Suggested Findings:

- As described herein for this particular case, the establishment, maintenance, and operation of the proposed Wellness Ranch Cannabis Cultivation project will not be detrimental to the health, safety, morals, comfort, and general welfare of persons residing or working in the neighborhood of the proposed use. The proposed cultivation improvements are in a rural area, are isolated, meet required property line and other setbacks, and have been well planned to minimize detrimental impacts and conflicts with people residing and working in the area, property and improvements in the neighborhood or the general welfare of the County.
- The cannabis cultivation project will be developed to Lake County standards and will provide for a high level of security and safety consistent with the County regulations.
- The cultivation site will be situated in the isolated, open, northern portion of the 106.5 acre parcel and will maximize property line setbacks from adjoining properties, wetland areas, and structures in order to minimize perceived detrimental health, safety, morals, comfort,

and general welfare impacts to people in the neighborhood and the region. There is an existing heavy oak tree cover between Wellness Ranch and the nearest neighbor to the north (APN 007-046-070). In response to neighborhood concerns, the project was reduced in size by 1 acre and the site plan redesigned in March of 2025 to eliminate the narrow line of sight and incorporate the proposed landscaped buffer. This buffer will include trees to provide a natural look and block the view of the outdoor garden from neighbors.

- The cannabis cultivation laws of the State of California and the County of Lake have been approved by the voters and seem to reflect the current moral mindset of many California and Lake County voters. The intent with regard to development of the Wellness Ranch 3 cannabis cultivation project is to be sensitive to the community's morality and comfort and general welfare of the Lakeport area by developing and operating state-of-the-art cannabis cultivation facilities in accordance with County and State requirements to minimize detrimental impacts.

2. That the site for the project is adequate in size, shape, location, and physical characteristics to accommodate the type of use and level of development proposed.

Applicant's Response and Suggested Findings:

- The subject site meets the co-located minimum 20-acre lot size for cannabis cultivation projects within the RL zoning district as adopted by the Lake County Board of Supervisors and within that context is adequate in terms of size, shape, location and physical characteristics to accommodate the type of use and level of development proposed.
- The 106.5-acre size and the "rectangular" shape of the parcel along with the physical characteristics, including the topography and open land areas, accommodate the proposed cultivation areas and the related infrastructure very well.
- The subject parcel is large, with approximately 600' of frontage on Ridge Road and as such provides for sufficient land area for development of the proposed cultivation areas. Related drying and processing activities will take place within the secure storage containers that will be replaced with a permanent processing building after year 3.
- The subject site has sufficient width and depth to accommodate the use and meet the required setbacks. The cultivation site will be setback from property lines, creeks, and Ridge Road, and may be viewed generally from the road through the trees. Additional trees will be planted to buffer the site from the adjacent residential use.
- The cultivation of cannabis is an agricultural activity involving the propagation and growing of plant materials within a soil medium along with the application of irrigation water.
- The subject site is compatible with County Zoning standards and nearby land uses.
- The project is to be developed with the canopy area allowed by and in accordance with the County Cannabis Ordinance. This will allow for a cultivation project in scale with the land and will result in the generation of tax revenues for the County of Lake and the State of California.
- The location is in an existing large acreage, low residential density site, compatible with surrounding land use activity.
- The proposed outdoor cultivation site is on a south facing gentle slope which will be sufficient for the cannabis gardens.

- The subject site has already been developed with a house, barn, pond, septic system, well, power, small cannabis gardens, indoor garden, good access, all of which has been inspected by County staff for compliance with the Zoning ordinance requirements and conditions of approval.

3. That the streets, highways and pedestrian facilities are reasonably adequate to safely accommodate the specific proposed use.

Applicant’s Response and Suggested Findings:

- The subject site is located on the northwest side of Ridge Road which is identified in the Lake County General Plan as a local road. Chapter 6 of the Lake County General Plan – the Transportation and Circulation Element indicates that local roads feed into minor collectors and community travel routes and collectors of traffic from local roads providing access to higher density residential areas, local commercial facilities, neighborhood parks and schools.
- Ridge Road is in good condition with good visibility and sight distance.
- The subject site is provided with two road-based driveway access points from Ridge Road into existing parking areas.
- The adjacent street and pedestrian facilities will safely accommodate the proposed cultivation facilities and the anticipated traffic that may be generated.
- The proposed cultivation project is set back from Ridge Road in a manner that protects natural and scenic resources.
- Roadway signing and speed limit signs have been posted on Ridge Road in accordance with County standards.
- Access to the site from Highland Springs Road is good.
- Highland Springs Road, a County owned and designated arterial road, extends west of the Highland Springs reservoir to the Mendocino County line.
- Highland Springs Road is also known as the Old Hopland Toll Road and has been in existence for over a century. This road was used by stagecoaches to carry visitors and residents to Lake County.
- Highland Springs Road is public right-of-way owned and maintained on a regular basis by the County of Lake Public Works Department.
- Highland Springs Road extends through several large parcels of land that are owned by the County of Lake.
- The “newer” bridge on Highland Springs Road over Highland Creek was built by the County utilizing federal grant funds.

4. That there are adequate public or private services, including but not limited to fire protection, water supply, sewage disposal, and police protection to serve the project.

Applicant’s Response and Suggested Findings:

- There is a history of public and private service delivery in the area. Public services include fire protection provided by the Lakeport County Fire District and CalFire, water supply provided from existing private wells, sewage disposal as provided through the existing septic tank and leach field area, and police protection as provided by the Lake County Sheriff’s Department. These public and private services will continue to be

available to the subject site and will be adequate to serve the proposed cannabis cultivation facilities.

- Comments and input from the Lakeport County Fire Protection District regarding site improvements and enhanced emergency services have been addressed and are as noted on the updated site plans dated September 2024.
- Lake County has developed and adopted a cannabis cultivation application fee and farm taxing structure that is intended to generate significant tax and revenue components that will benefit County departments in their provision of adequate public services including but not limited to the Sheriff's Department law enforcement services.
- Applicants for cannabis cultivation Use Permits such as the Wellness Ranch are required to pay significant land-use application fees to cover the costs of the Lake County Community Development Department's processing services and the involvement of numerous other County Departments. Building permit and plan check application fees cover the cost associated with review of plans and issuance of permits.
- Other fees for permits and services are charged by the County/State in order to cover the cost of providing services including for required background checks, air quality management permits, grading permits, water quality permits, streambed alteration agreements, driveway curb cut permits, septic permits, fire mitigation expenses, etc.

5. **That the project is in conformance with the applicable provisions and policies of this Code, the General Plan and any approved zoning or land use plan.**

Applicant's Response and Suggested Findings:

- The project is in conformance with the applicable provisions and policies of the Lake County Zoning Ordinance and the Lake County General Plan. The subject site is designated by the Lake County General Plan as Rural Lands.
- The Lake County General Plan contains many goals and policies concerning economic development including - **Goal LU – 1. *To encourage the overall economic and social growth of the County while maintaining its quality of life standards.*** The Wellness Ranch project is consistent with this Lake County General Plan Goal in that a fundamental premise of the facility and its operations is to cultivate a legal cash crop, which will generate business income and regional employment opportunities, just like all other farming operations which will enhance the overall economic and social growth of the County. The Rural Lands General Plan Designation of the site mentions *“important groundwater recharge functions. As watershed lands, these lands function to collect precipitation and provide for important filtering of water to improve water quality”*. The Wellness Ranch outdoor site design will support this General Plan Policy.
- The project will be operated in accordance with **Lake County General Plan** policies regarding maintenance of on-site drainage features to promote groundwater recharge functions and to properly manage the natural infrastructure of the watershed. There will be minimal ground disturbance activity and grading, the small parking areas and access driveways will be provided with base rock-pervious surfaces to facilitate rainwater absorption. Maintaining the open environment and minimizing water runoff are important operational features of this project.
- Lake County General Plan Land-Use Goal LU – 4 is ***to maintain economic vitality and promote the development of commercial uses that are compatible with surrounding land uses and meet the present and future needs of Lake County residents, the***

regional community and visitors. The proposed design of the project with its open footprint, isolated site location, and minimal impervious surfaces, is compatible with the existing and surrounding land and farming uses and will help meet the current and future needs of Lake County residents, the regional community, and visitors to the area.

- General Plan Land-Use Goal LU – 6 is to ***maintain a healthy and diverse local economy that meets the present and future employment, shopping, recreational, and service needs of Lake County.*** The development of the proposed cultivation project is consistent with this goal. The cultivation business income, the generation of County revenues, the increased expenditure of employee’s disposable income within Lake County, will all help enhance and maintain a healthy local economy and produce jobs. The revolving of local business revenue expended locally will help meet the employment, retail, recreational, and service’s needs of the region.
- Lake County General Plan Policy LU – 6.1 ***promotes the development of a diversified economic base by continuing to promote agriculture, recreation services and commercial development.*** Over the years Lake County has encouraged and supported agricultural, recreational and commercial/resort development and business operations. The proposed Wellness Ranch project is consistent with prior County actions and promotes the agricultural sector with a well-designed layout which should be quite productive. The project is consistent with other facilities that have been approved and operated in Lake County.
- **The Lake County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Vision** is to achieve a sustainable, resilient, and prosperous economy that provides opportunity for an economically and socially diverse labor force and entrepreneurs that are educated, trained and prepared for future changes while protecting our rural agriculture-based quality of life and environment and providing a stable base for quality public services and programs. The **CEDS** provides a snapshot of the economic situation in Lake County. The economy of Lake County is based on tourism and agriculture. Important trends to note are the large increases in the self-employment sector, and an ongoing resurgence in agricultural employment. Lake County recreation and tourism is based on the lakes, the outdoors, fine wines and good food, good customer service, and a lifestyle still grounded in agriculture. Opportunities in this regard include promotion of sustainable agricultural practices and ag tourism attraction activities. The Land Use Element of the Lake County General Plan has additional policies that promote key industries including Agri-tourism (Policy LU-6.8). The proposed Wellness Ranch cultivation project should help support Agri-tourism and will help the County meet its goals of communicating the area’s amenities and attributes and could help meet or exceed the potential for increased tourism and enhanced visitor experiences.

6. **That no violation of Chapters 5, 17, 21, 23 or 26 of the Lake County Code currently exists on the property, unless the purpose of the permit is to correct the violation, or the permit relates to a portion of the property which is sufficiently separate and apart from the portion of the property in violation so as not to be affected by the violation from a public health, safety or general welfare basis.**

Applicant’s Response and Suggested Findings:

- The proposed Wellness Ranch cultivation project at 6751 Ridge Road has submitted annual compliance reports to the County and has been physically inspected by County CDD staff on a yearly basis. There are no findings indicating that the project is affected by any existing known violations of Chapters 5, 17, 21, 23, or 26 of the Lake County Code.

Conclusion

Wellness Ranch has prepared and presented a comprehensive Major Use Permit application package including the completed County application form and supplemental questionnaire, The Project Description document, site plans, Property Management Plan, and associated documents/exhibits in support of the approval of the Major Use Permit to develop and operate the outdoor and indoor Cannabis Cultivation project at 6751 Ridge Road.

The application documents provide factual information concerning the project that supports approval of the Major Use Permit application.

There are considerable facts and suggested findings herein and in the Property Management Plan which support approval of and the establishment of the Wellness Ranch cannabis cultivation project on the subject property.

The proposed cannabis cultivation project will support Agri-tourism and will help the County of Lake meet its goals of communicating the area’s amenities and attributes and could help meet or exceed the potential for increased tourism and enhanced visitor experiences.

The cannabis farm business income, the generation of significant County revenues, employment opportunities and the increased expenditure of employee’s disposable income within Lake County, will all help enhance and maintain a healthy local economy and produce jobs.

The proposed project is consistent with and promotes the Lake County economy with a properly sited, well designed cultivation project. The cannabis cultivation business in Lake County shows continued strength and demand and has the potential to become a foundation for economic recovery.

It is respectfully requested that the Lake County Planning Commission approve the Major Use Permit application for the Wellness Ranch 3 cannabis cultivation project based on the suggested findings and on the project application documentation as submitted.

Thank you for your consideration and approval.