County of San Benito

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY
2301 Technology Parkway, Hollister, CA 95023
(831) 637-5313 • FAX: (831) 637-5334

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT
NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

The San Benito County Resource Management Agency has reviewed the project described below and has determined that it is exempt from the provisions of CEQA as specified in Sections 15061 - 15332 of CEQA for the reason(s) which have been specified in this document.

Application Number: PLN250041

Cannabis Permit Number: 35-2026-0004

Assessor Parcel Number: 029-140-032

Project Location: 0 Old Hernandez Rd Paicines, CA 95043 (see attached map)

Project Title: PLN250041 Commercial Cultivation Nursury

Project Description: Outdoor cannabis cultivation. Project encompasses a maximum of 9.75 acres of cannabis canopy on a 290.74 acre parcel (see attached "Project Description Preparation Form_0 Old Hernandez Road" and "Site Diagram_0 Old Hernandez Road Road").

Person or Agency Proposing Project: Elan Goldbart (Refined Genetics, LLC.)

Contact Email: egoldbart@refinedgenetics.com

Contact Phone Number: (510) 847-7711

Contact Address: 10 San Miguel Avenue, Salinas CA, 93901

A. _____ The proposed activity is not a project under CEQA Guidelines Section 15378.

B. _____ The proposed activity is not subject to CEQA as specified under CEQA Guidelines Section 15060 (c).

C. _____ **Ministerial Project** involving only the use of fixed standards or objective measurements without personal judgment.

D. _____ **Statutory Exemption** other than a Ministerial Project (CEQA Guidelines Section 15260 to 15285).

E. __X__ **Categorical Exemption**

Specify type: 15301 Class 1: Use of existing facilities; 15304 Class 4: Minor Alterations to Land; 15311 Class 11: Accessory Structures.

Class	Category	Description
Class 1	Existing Facilities	Consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing at the time of the lead agency's determination. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, §15301.)
Class 4	Minor Alterations to Land	Consists of minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry and agricultural purposes. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15304.)
Class 11	Accessory Structures	Consists of construction, or placement of minor structures accessory to (appurtenant to) existing commercial, industrial, or institutional facilities (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15311.)

F. Reasons why the project is exempt:

Cultivation on an existing commerically-farmed property.

In addition, none of the conditions described in Section 15300.2 apply to this project.

Signed by:
Stephanie Reck
F54C32B38E604EC...

Date: 5/08/2026

Stephanie Reck, Senior Planner

Email: sreck@sanbenitocountyca.gov

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (831) 718-7960

ATTACHMENTS:

- "Project Description Preparation Form_0 Old Hernandez Road";
- "Site Diagram_0 Old Hernandez Road";
- "BMOP_0 Old Hernandez Road";
- "San Benito County CBRP Permit 35-2026-0004".

CalCannabis Cultivation Licensing

Project Description Preparation Form

Lead Agency: County of San Benito Resource Management Agency

Applicant Entity/Business Name: Refined Genetics LLC

License Type(s): Cultivation

Date: May 8, 2026

1. **Source(s) of Information:**

   Identify Sources: San Benito County License Application Submission.

2. **Project Location:**

   Describe Project Location: 0 Old Hernandez Rd Paicines, CA 95043, 36.428304766378425, -120.9655400309033 for 9.75 acres of canopy of cannabis for a nursery operation on a project site that totals 290.74 acres on APN: 029-140-032.

   Maps Included: Property and Premises Diagram included

3. **Description of Project Site:**

   General Topographic Features (slopes and other features): Large agricultural parcel consisting of is a flat to gently sloping agricultural field with pre-existing use for agricultural crops. The soil is made up of well-drained sandy loam and an on-site well will continue to service the agricultural operations. The property has existing structures including a residence, sheds, paddock, barn, and corral. While the parcel itself is 290.74 acres the canopy will only encompass 9.75 acres.

   Natural Features (general vegetation types, presence of streams and wetlands, forested areas): The sire consists of open rangeland with sparse vegetation. The San Benito River runs through the property adjacent to the cultivation area roughly 398 feet to the southwest of the cultivation nursery area. The river has been reviewed by Fish and Wildlife and Central Coast Water Quality Control Board and provided the appropriate approvals.

   Existing Land Uses/Zoning: These parcels have a General Plan designation of Rangeland (R) and a zoning designation of Agricultural Rangeland (AR). The intent of the AR zoning district is to provide for areas within the county to be used for agricultural rangeland purposes as set forth in the general plan. Very low-density residential development and farmworker housing are permitted due to the lack of public infrastructure and for the preservation of open space and agriculture. Cannabis cultivation is defined as agricultural and is a principally-permitted use with the AR zone

   Existing Constructed Features (buildings, facilities, and other improvements): The property has existing structures including a gravel driveway, water crossing, residence, sheds, paddock, barn, and corral.

   Surrounding Land Uses (including sensitive uses): All surrounding parcels have General Plan

Designation of Rangeland (R) with a zoning district of Agricultural Rangeland (AR). Most parcels are vacant and traditionally used for cattle grazing whether actively in use for grazing or not.

4. **Required Site Improvements and Construction Activities:**

   Site Improvements: Operation and Maintenance Activities: The project consists of cannabis nursery operations occurring outdoors. Site improvements include motion-activated lighting, security cameras, privacy fencing and screening, and lockable gates with Knox Key Switches pursuant to Fire Department regulations.

   Construction Activities: Installation of lighting, security cameras, fencing, and gates. There will be no tree removal, grading, or excavation.

5. **Operation and Maintenance Activities:**

   Hours of Operation/Work Shifts: 7:00am-3:00pm

   Number of employees (total and by shift): 2 full-time employee Monday through Friday.

   Estimated Daily Trip Generation: 1 vehicle per business day for the employee on site. 2 delivers of seeds a year and 2 pickups per year to send to processing.

   Source(s) of Water: A well located on the parcel and bottled water for employees.

   Wastewater Treatment Facilities: Septic + leachfield for pre-existing residence with portable toilets for employees.

   Source(s) of Power: PG&E

6. **Environmental Commitments:** "Best Management and Operational Practices" (BMOP) requirements apply to all non-retail commercial cannabis businesses to reduce the environmental impacts of cannabis operations. A BMOP plan for this project was reviewed by the County of San Benito Cannabis Coordinator and is kept on file with the license application. BMOP requirements for this project are noted below:

   The applicant's BMOP includes "Siting Criteria" and "Site Design" measures including: avoiding and minimizing the impact to land and biotic resources including avoidance of excessive grading due to site design, minimizing site disturbance due to existing features, maintenance and implementation of fencing and security, and waste management plan.

   The applicants BMOP includes "Operational Requirements" as approved by the San Benito County Cannabis Coordinator including: energy efficiency and sustainability, water supply and quality, waste, pest and herbivore management, and access control.

   Exceptions to categorical exemptions cited for the proposed non-retail cannabis project include: Class 1 "Existing Facilities", Class 4 "Minor Alterations to Land", Class 11 "Accessory Structures". The County of San Benito Resource Management Agency has determined that the proposed project 1) is not visible from scenic highways and/or impactful to scenic resources, 2) is not located on a "Cortese List" site, 3) does not substantially change a historic resource, 4) is likely to not contribute to a significant cumulative environmental impact, 5) is not subject (by location and/or design) to unusual circumstances that would reasonably contribute to a significant environmental impact.

7. Environmental Permits Required (List all required federal, state, and local permits required):

Agency	Permit	Status
Department of Cannabis Control	Annual Cultivation License	Pending Approval
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	Section 1602 Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement	**EPIMS-SBO-59347-R4** **NNR Provided**
State Water Resources Control Board / Regional Water Quality Control Board	Water quality protection program	**WDID:** 3_35CC462143 NOA Provided
San Benito County Resource Management Agency	Zoning Clearance	Approved May 6, 2026
San Benito County Resource Management Agency	Annual Cannabis Business Permit	CBRP Permit 35-2026-0004

San Benito County Parcel Report

05/06/2026

APN: 0291400320 **Current Document:** 2023R0001297 **Jurisdiction:** San Benito County

Owner: GIUDICI ARENA 1996 TR ET AL **Owner Address:** 888 MONTEREY ST **Owner CSZ:** HOLLISTER CA 95023

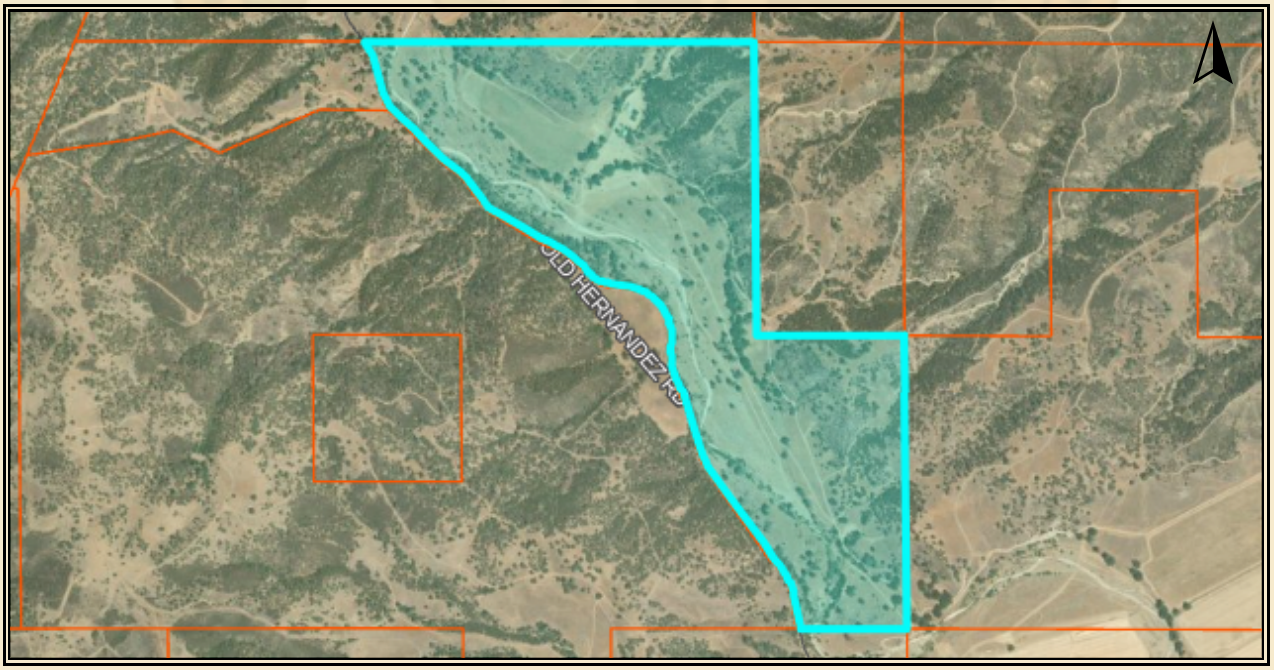
Site Address: 0 HERNANDEZ AREA **Site CSZ:** PAICINES CA **Acres:** 290.74

Land Value: 34734 **Recorded Map:** 2023-178 **Use Code:** WGRA

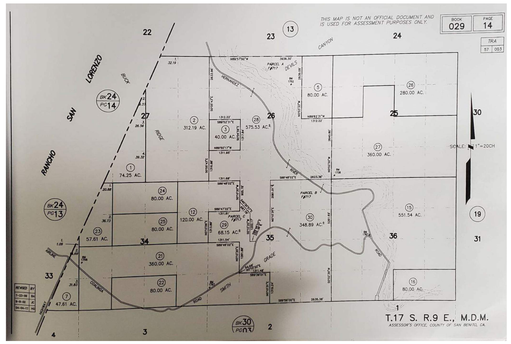
Fault Zone: NO **Flood Zone:** Not in Floodplain **Fire Hazard:** Very High

County GP: Rangeland **County Zoning:** Agricultural Rangeland

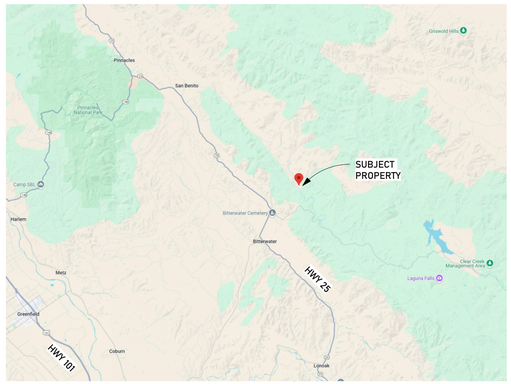
Note:



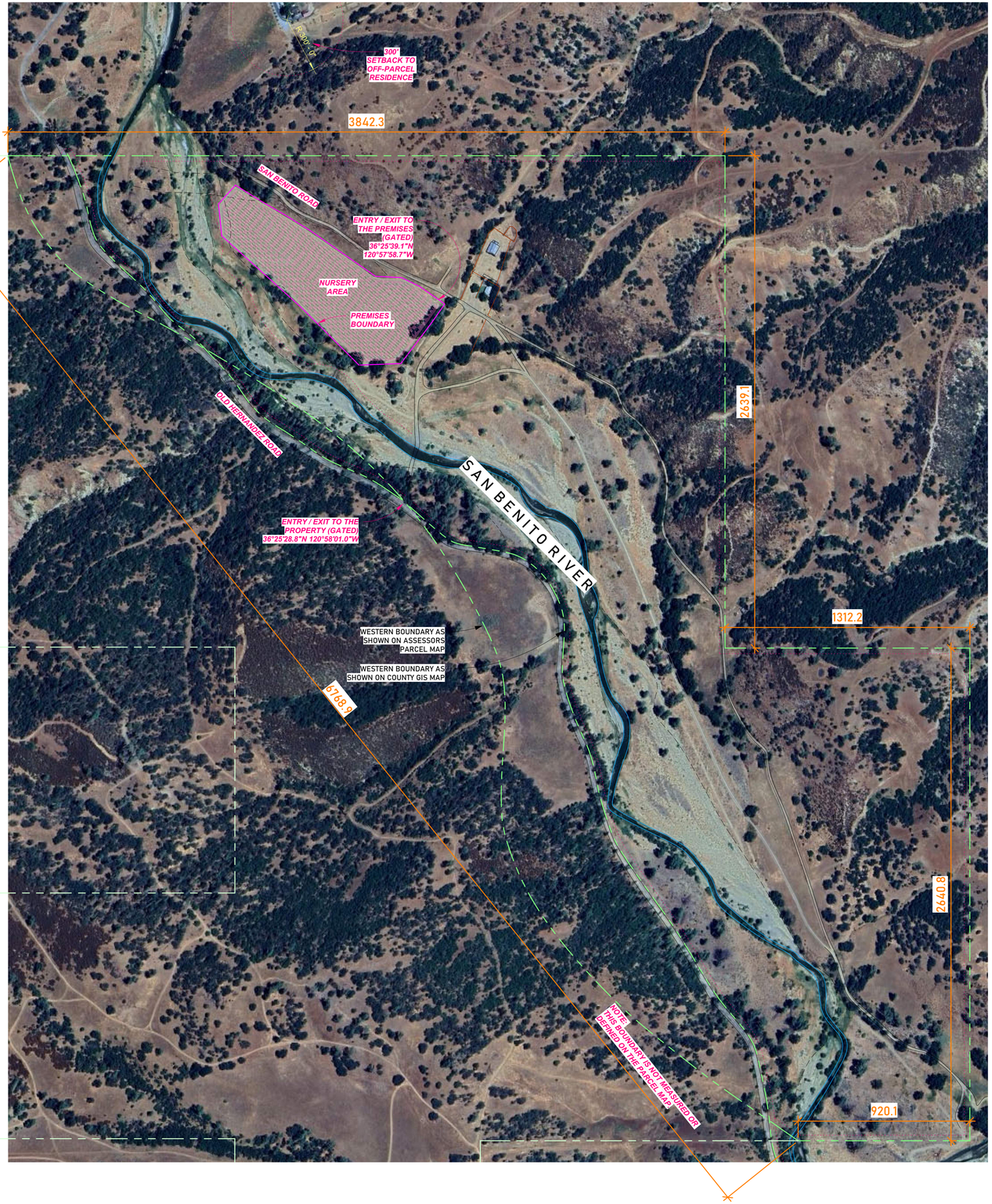
This map is a user generated static output from an internet mapping site and is for reference only. Data layers that appear on this map may or may not be accurate, current, or otherwise reliable.



ASSESSOR'S PARCEL MAP
FOR REFERENCE
NOT TO SCALE



VICINITY MAP
FOR REFERENCE
NOT TO SCALE



NOTE:
NO MATURE PLANTS ON SITE
NO CANNABIS WASTE ON SITE
NO MANUFACTURING, PROCESSING, PACKAGING ON SITE
NO OTHER CANNABIS LICENSES / LICENSEES ON SITE

NO SETBACK OF 600 FEET FROM ANY STRUCTURE OR FACILITY CONTAINING A SENSITIVE USE AT THE TIME OF APPLICATION (§19.43.070)

SITE IS 45+ MILES FROM HOLLISTER
50+ MILES FROM SAN JUAN BAUTISTA (NO SOI CONFLICT)
NO STATE HIGHWAY WITHIN 100' OF SITE
NO OFF PARCEL RESIDENCE WITHIN 300' OF SITE
NO PERMITTED WINE TASTING ROOMS WITHIN 1/2 MILE OF SITE

1 Satellite Site
1" = 300'-0"

NORTH

150' 600' 1800
300' 1200'

WHITFIELD ARCHITECTS
3626 Folsom Street
San Francisco, California
415 . 724 . 6279
WHITFIELD-ARCHITECTS . COM

Refined Genetics LLC

10947 Old Hernandez Rd
Paicines, CA
95043

APN: 0291400320

OWNER:Property Onwers:
H&G Farming LLC & Magginetti Family Properties ETAL

ISSUED
8 APRIL 2025

NAME
SATELLITE SITE DIAGRAM

#
pg 1

Project Number pg 1 SATELLITE SITE DIAGRAM

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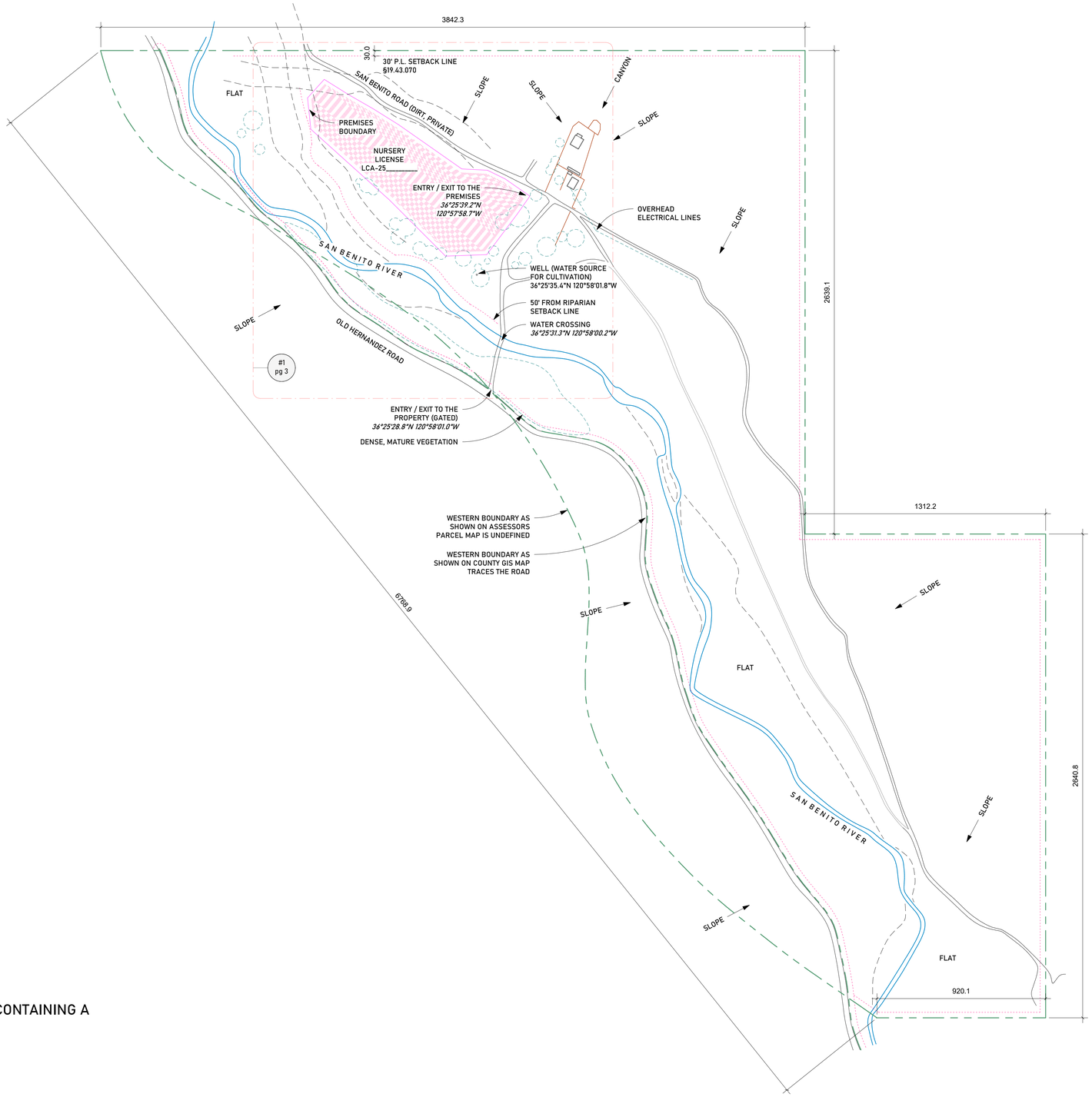

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1 PROPERTY DIAGRAM
1" = 300'-0"

NORTH

150' 300' 600' 1200' 1800

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NAME
PROPERTY DIAGRAM

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pg 2

Project Number pg 2 PROPERTY DIAGRAM

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1 PREMISES DIAGRAM
1" = 100'-0"

NORTH

50' 100' 200' 400' 600

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NAME
PREMISES DIAGRAM

#
pg 3

Project Number pg 3 PREMISES DIAGRAM

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Bmop Siting Design

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Best Management and Operational Practices (BMOP)

Siting Criteria (Section A) and Site Design (Section B)

Siting Criteria (Section A)

To ensure compliance with the Best Management and Operational Practices (BMOP) and maintain responsible land use, our project has been carefully designed to meet all applicable siting criteria:

1. Zoning Compliance

- The cultivation site is located within a properly zoned agricultural area (AR/AP) as required under San Benito County Code 19.43.070(A).
- The site is not within residential zones, environmentally sensitive areas, or restricted industrial zones.

2. Setback Requirements

- The cultivation area is at least 600 feet from any sensitive uses (e.g., schools, parks, daycare centers).
- A minimum 300-foot setback is maintained from any off-parcel permitted residences.
- The site is strategically located to minimize visual, noise, and odor impacts on nearby properties.

3. Environmental Protection & Sustainability

- Water Source: The operation relies on an on-site well with an efficient drip irrigation system, ensuring no impact on local water supply.
- Soil Conservation: No extensive grading or excavation is required as the property has pre-existing agricultural fields. Cover cropping and organic soil amendments will be used to prevent erosion.
- Odor Control: Given that this is an outdoor seed cultivation operation, odor is minimal. The operation is designed to align with BMOP Section D.6 (Odor Abatement Plan).

4. Traffic & Access Considerations

- Minimal traffic impact, as daily operations involve one to two employees on-site and occasional visits from licensed distribution vehicles for seed transport.
- The site has adequate road access for delivery vehicles, ensuring safe and efficient transport.

5. Security & Public Safety

- Security measures will include controlled access, fencing, and 24-hour surveillance in compliance with San Benito County Cannabis Security Requirements.
- The property has a natural barrier of trees and vegetation, enhancing security while reducing visual exposure from public roads.

Site Design Requirements (Section B)

Our facility design ensures compliance with BMOP Site Design Requirements,

incorporating key principles of responsible cannabis cultivation:

1. Land Use Efficiency

- The cultivation area is limited to seed production, with minimal infrastructure required.
- No permanent structures will be built aside from temporary storage units for processing and packaging harvested seeds.

2. Stormwater & Erosion Control

- A stormwater management plan is in place to ensure compliance with County standards, preventing runoff into adjacent properties or waterways.
- Drip irrigation minimizes water use and reduces runoff, while natural vegetation around the site acts as a buffer.

3. Waste Management

- All cannabis waste, including trimmed plant material and expired seeds, will be composted or disposed of in accordance with County and CalRecycle guidelines.
- No hazardous waste will be generated, as the operation does not involve volatile extraction or chemical processing.

4. Energy Efficiency & Sustainability

- The site operates entirely on natural sunlight, eliminating the need for artificial lighting and reducing environmental impact.

5. Pest & Herbivore Management

- Integrated Pest Management (IPM) techniques will be used to prevent infestations, prioritizing biological controls over chemical pesticides.
- Perimeter fencing and wildlife deterrents will be installed to prevent damage from herbivores while maintaining ecological balance.

Conclusion

This cannabis cultivation project has been designed to fully align with the Best Management and Operational Practices (BMOP) by ensuring responsible land use, minimal environmental impact, and compliance with San Benito County regulations. Through thoughtful site selection, sustainable resource management, and adherence to security and setback requirements, the operation will contribute positively to the local agricultural economy while maintaining compliance with all applicable County and State cannabis regulations.

Write something...

Pest Management Plan

Refined Genetics employs an Integrated Pest Management System to control pests and disease on its crops. Careful observation and the utilization of mechanical, biological, and chemical controls may be used to treat the presence of pests and disease. Refined Genetics will contract 3rd party companies such as Green Valley Farm Supply or Nutrien Ag Solutions to apply any biological or chemical pesticides to the field. Application methods may include spraying, dusting, or injection through drip irrigation. The 3rd party companies are responsible for maintaining their own Pesticide Operator ID, submitting pesticide use reports, and following best management practices for the application of pesticides. A list of products to be used is attached.

Waste Management Plan

There will be no hazardous waste produced on the premises. On site staff will be trained to discard nonhazardous waste and recycling will be into clearly marked bins. Waste receptacles will be self hauled to a county approved landfill. Any waste produced by agricultural inputs brought to the premises by our approved 3rd party applicators will be removed from the premises at their own expense. No materials will be stored on the premises.

Hazardous materials plan

There will be no hazardous materials used or stored on the premises.

Security plan

The Property maintains 4’ welded wire fencing with 2 strands of barb wire above the welded fencing. The property also has substantial vegetation providing a visual screen from the premises. The gate to the property is currently locked manually with a chain and padlock. Would it be okay with the Fire Dept to install a Knox box by the gate with a key for the Fire department to open the gate manually? We will install 24 hour video surveillance on the access gate.

Stormwater Management Plan

Refined Genetics LLC
Site Address: 10947 Old Hernandez Road, Paicines, CA
APN: 029-140-032-0

1. Introduction

This Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP) outlines the methods that will be used to manage stormwater runoff from the outdoor cannabis cultivation operation. The goal is to prevent erosion, sediment transport, and the contamination of nearby water resources, ensuring compliance with County and State environmental standards.

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2. Site Overview

- **Type of Cultivation**: Outdoor cannabis seed production
- **Topography**: Flat to Gently sloping agricultural field with pre-existing use for cultivation of agricultural crops
- **Soil Type**: Well-drained sandy loam soil
- **Water Source**: On-site well with drip irrigation
- **Proximity to Water Bodies**: A seasonal stream is located more than 100 feet from the cultivation area, in compliance with County riparian setback standards.

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3. Stormwater Control Measures

A. Erosion Control

- **Cover Cropping**: Between planting cycles, the field will be planted with cover crops to anchor soil and reduce erosion.
- **Conservation tillage Practices**: Minimal soil disturbance will be used to maintain existing soil structure and reduce erosion.

B. Runoff Prevention

- **Drip Irrigation**: Water will be delivered directly to plant roots to avoid oversaturation and surface runoff.
- **Graded Access Roads**: Any access paths will be graded slightly away from cultivation areas to minimize erosion and ruts.
- **Runoff Diversion**: Shallow swales or contour furrows will be constructed around the perimeter of the cultivation zone to direct excess water away from sensitive areas.

C. Sediment Control

- **Straw Wattles**: Straw wattles will be placed along drainage paths or contour lines where necessary to intercept sediment-laden water.
- **Vegetative Buffers**: A natural vegetation buffer will be maintained between the cultivation site and any nearby watercourses.

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4. Infrastructure and Materials Management

- **Equipment Storage**: Any agricultural equipment will be stored on compacted or stabilized areas away from slopes or drainages. During the winter months, Equipment will be removed from the premises.
- **Fertilizer Handling**: Fertilizers will not be stored on site. Nutrients will be delivered by 3rd party applicators and applied within 24 hours to avoid on-site runoff risk.

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5. Monitoring & Maintenance

- **Weekly Inspections**: Site will be inspected weekly during the wet season (Oct–April) and after significant storm events (>0.5 inches) to check for erosion, pooling, and sediment movement.
- **Immediate Repairs**: Any signs of erosion or failed control measures will be addressed within 48 hours.

- **Annual Review**: The SWMP will be reviewed annually and updated as needed based on performance or regulatory changes.

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6. Emergency Measures

- **Spill Kits**: Basic spill response materials will be maintained on site in the unlikely event of fuel or chemical spills.

- **Storm Damage Response**: Any damage from heavy rainfall will be documented and remedied immediately to prevent downstream impact.

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7. Regulatory Compliance

This plan is designed to comply with:

- **San Benito County BMOP Section D.3**

- **California State Water Resources Control Board – Cannabis Cultivation General Order**

- **San Benito County Environmental Health Department Best Practices**

Refined Genetics LLC

Pest control Products List

Product Name	Active Ingredient
Pyganic 5.0 EC	Pyrethrins
Azaguard	Azidirachtin
Double Nickel 55	Bacillus amyloliquefaciens strain: D747
Trilogy	Neem oil
Thyme Guard	Thyme Oil
Ecotec	Rosemary oil, peppermint oil
Debug turbo	Azidirachtin
Mycotrol WPO	Beauveria bassiana strain: GHA
Gnatrol WDG	Bacillus thuringiensis 37.4%
NoFly WP	Paecilomyces fumosoroseus strain FE 9901
Dipel Pro DF Biological Insecticide	Bacillus thuringiensis subsp. kurstaki, strain ABTS-351, fermentation solids and solubles
PFR-97 WP	Isaria fumosorosea Apopka Strain 97
Milstop	Potassium bicarbonate
Cease LC	Bacillus Subtillis
Thiolux	sulfur
Oxidate	Hydrogen Peroxide, Peracetic acid
Rootshield WP Biological Fungicide	Trichoderma harzianum rifai strain: KRL-AG2
Sil-Matrix	Potassium silicate

San Benito County Cannabis Business Regulatory Program
2301 Technology Parkway
Hollister, CA 95023

CANNABIS BUSINESS PERMIT

Legal Business Name

Refined Genetics, LLC.

Premise APNs

029-140-032

Premise Address

0 Old Hernandez, Paicines, CA 95043

Valid

5/8/2026 – 5/8/2027

Permit ID

35-2026-0004

Permit Type

PLN250041 - Outdoor Nursery Cultivation of 9.75 acres of canopy on a 290.74 acre parcel.

NON-TRANSFERABLE

POST IN PUBLIC VIEW

*Note: this business permit does not grant a San Benito County Business License. A business license will be required as condition of the use permit.