

Public Comment
Rec 10/6/25 MT

October 6, 2025

To: The Agriculture Commissioners of El Dorado County, California

eldcag@edcgov.us

RE: Planning Request to Review:

CCUP22-0002/ Hidden Ranch Commercial Cannabis Cultivation Commercial Cannabis
Use Permit Assessor's Parcel Number: 046-061-037

My name is Carroll Hudson. I live in Somerset at 2081 Hidden Ranch Rd., and my property line is shared with the subject property, 2145 Hidden Ranch Rd. My neighbors and I oppose this project for many reasons, which I have listed in the following:

Most residents of Hidden Ranch and Apache Pass Roads have been here more than a decade, some multiple decades, long before marijuana was legalized. We never had any idea that we would find ourselves having to rally against a drug crop being grown and processed within a stone's throw of our homes.

We are standing together to strongly oppose an unnamed applicant for the Commercial Cannabis and Processing project now before the El Dorado County Agricultural Commission.

Cannabis per El Dorado County's definition is NOT agriculture. Not at all like growing forage or fruits and nuts...This proposal is asking to grow a recreational / medical crop as well as processing that drug for sale in our County and elsewhere. We are not condemning those who wish to partake of this drug in a responsible manner. That is not what our opposition is about. Our opposition is about what we see as critical information and facts that may not be known to the commissioners and planners charged with evaluating a potential Commercial Enterprise in an Agricultural Zone that is surrounded by single family homes with children, and an abundance of wildlife.

This opposition is about proper and acceptable land use, environmental and habitat impacts, health and security impacts, water and waste management issues as well as air quality impacts.

Decision makers must be made aware of the following:

There is one school bus stop within 1500 feet of the project property line. There are two public schools (elementary and middle grades), and a Bible Church with Sunday schools within a half mile of the proposed project.

There are children aged infant, preschool, elementary, middle school, to high school that live in these surrounding homes with several living within 1,000 ft. of the proposed project. They certainly should not be exposed to the potential issues that come with drug farming.

We are zoned Planned Agriculture (PA-20) and General Plan Land Use /designation of Agricultural Lands-Agricultural District (AL-A). NOT COMMERCIAL, which is what this Commercial Cannabis Cultivation project is described to be.

Hidden Ranch Rd. Is a single lane, private dirt road, unimproved and not suitable in any way for commercial traffic according to El Dorado County's designations. One way in and one way out.

The proposed project sits atop a hill with an elevation 200-300 ft. higher than the neighbors, so air pollution, pungent odors and water runoff will all end up affecting the surrounding properties. All the surrounding properties are on private wells, some relatively shallow, so we are conservative with our water usage. Outdoor cannabis grow operations are estimated to consume approximately 6 gallons of water per plant per day. The proposed project will get it's water from the same water table we do and will need to use between 36,000 and 60,000 gallons of water each day if not more, depending on the density of plantings achieved within the proposed 80,000 sq. ft. grow area. This means certainly some of our resident's wells will go dry. It is not surprising that the project applicant is asking to install 7 new 5,000-gallon storage tanks in addition to the four 5,000-gallon tanks already in the ground on the property, with a total storage of 55,000 gallons, enough water supply for the anticipated crop during a one-day power outage (which is known to occur in South County relatively often).

Cannabis cultivators and processors generate a wide variety of waste streams. Grow operations generate ag waste that must be managed and disposed of as a regulated or scheduled substance. Is El Dorado County ready to monitor and enforce these types of challenges?

Wastewater runoff is another of our concerns. if not properly managed through approved filtration methods, and recycling for reuse, we can expect a substantial runoff to be exiting the proposed site via the creek at base of the hill and carrying contamination containing pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers and rodenticide residues into our surrounding pastures and designated seasonal wetlands.

Wildlife habitat is also an area that a project like this will likely have a major impact. We have many different species visible to the residents here every day. Deer, Coyote, countless Bird species (some protected) both local and migratory, Bobcat, Bear, and Mountain Lion as well. Many very desirable, some not so much, but this is their home as well as ours. Many residents keep livestock, horses, goats, sheep and more. They eat the forage, grass and weeds helping us mitigate Wildfire fuels. Contamination due to Cannabis farming and cultivation must not be tolerated.

Last but not least is the dread of the criminal element so often attracted to these businesses, possibly putting our innocent community in jeopardy. Since the Federal Government has yet to recognize Cannabis as a legal drug, BANKS will not accept checks, credit cards nor online transactions with these businesses. Cannabis operations are forced to deal in cash transactions, which means most operations are "cash heavy" and in turn are considered attractive targets by criminals. Legalization does not solve all the underground problems associated with the Cannabis industry...so it is here we find ourselves.

Thank You

Carroll M. Hudson

Kimberly Hudson

Scott Carey

Diane Hawks

Adam Alderman

Linda Alderman

Jeanette Rice

Billy Ellis

Janet Fraser

Brian McIntyre

Kyle Sjoberg

Kristie Sjoberg

Hailey Brady

Lone Nielsen

Elaine Hoyt

*A few neighbors in support of opposition, *Signatures available upon request