Upper Salinas – Las Tablas Resource Conservation District
Growing Responsible and Socially Sustainable – Cannabis (GRASS-C)

State regulations enacted January 1, 2017.

SLO County Cannabis Ordinance in effect December 31, 2017
- Total cannabis licenses = 141 for SLO County
- Regulate types of operations, locations, and permit requirements
Role of Resource Conservation Districts

- RCDs are non-regulatory, technical resource providers.

- Annual CARCD conference in Sacramento November 2017, CDFA highlighted the need for RCDs to be involved at some level


- Other RCDs have taken a “wait and see” approach
Upper Salinas – Las Tablas RCD

- Received significant interest from local growers in SLO County to develop a program to incorporate all aspects of agricultural production and sustainability.

- Took initiative to develop a “verification” program modeled after SIP.

- USLTRCD developed program to be focused on SLO county, yet capable of being adopted to other counties in CA.
Growing Responsible and Socially Sustainable Cannabis (GRASS-C)

- Best management practice verification program
- 3 Main Categories: Installation; O&M; and, Workforce
- Guiding principles include: protect, conserve, and enhance natural resources, human concerns for achieving sustainable ag systems, and ecological interactions between operations and ecological communities.
Installation of Growing Operation

- Intent was to ensure the operation considered location, surrounding resource issues, and setup prior to any cultivation.

- Broken into land use & conservation measures and planting setup.

- Categories include topography, soils, light/sun, access/roads, waterbodies, fish and wildlife resources, cultural resources, power, water use, etc.
Operation and Maintenance

- Consideration of ongoing cultivation for long-term resource concerns

- Divided into Crop Water Use, Soil & Sediment Control, Waste Management, Materials Storage, Pest Management

- Evaluates issues such as organic matter on-site, prevention of soil erosion, identification and management of pests, and storing and disposal of materials
Workforce

- Consider providing a safe and fair working environment for employees in cannabis cultivation.

- Unlike other industries, cannabis has not been through the same human resource personnel training.

- Evaluate pay scales, benefits, training, and performance evaluations.
Example of the Certification Program

Upper Salinas-Las Tablas Resource Conservation District
85 S. Main St. Ste. 107 Templeton, CA 93465 | 805.343.0300 x 3100 | www.us-rcd.org

number of hours/day of sunlight is present throughout the growing season. If using artificial light, the operator should have a plan for number of hours of light exposure needed to induce various stages of plant growth.

1. Does the operation use artificial light?
   - Yes  ☐
   - No ☐

2. Has any native vegetation removal occurred to develop a planting area?
   - Yes ☐
   - No ☐

3. What percent of total grow time is reliant on artificial light?
   - 0-25% (□)
   - 25-50% (□)
   - 50-75% (□)
   - 75-100% (□)

Access/Roads – All access roads need to be installed and maintained to reduce impacts to hydrology and soil by limiting erosion and sediment. Roads should be constructed to avoid watercourses to the best ability. In addition, proper rural road construction BMPs such as those found in the Pacific Watershed Associates Handbook for Forest, Ranch, and Rural Roads (http://www.pacificwatershed.com/sites/default/files/roardsenglishbook/april2015b_0.pdf).

1. Are access roads constructed to minimize erosion?
   - Yes ☐
   - No ☐

2. Are there signs of rilling, ponding, or gullying on any access roads?
   - Yes ☐
   - No ☐

3. Are appropriate crossings and drainage systems installed?
   - Yes ☐
   - No ☐

Waterbodies – Each facility should be aware of the waterbodies surrounding their property and have established strategies to protect those resources. For example, operations should have minimum setbacks from various waterbody classifications (i.e. perennial, intermittent, ephemeral, or man-made drainage) to reduce contamination of watercourses. United States Fish and Wildlife service provides an online wetlands mapper tool (https://www.fws.gov/wetlands/) that can be used to identify watercourses and wetlands throughout the United States.

1. Has the operation identified waterbodies occurring on site?
   - Yes ☐
   - No ☐

2. Have downstream basins been identified?
   - Yes ☐
   - No ☐

3. Are there established minimum setbacks from waterbodies?
   - Yes ☐
   - No ☐

Fill in the table with the appropriate waterbody and estimated setback for each.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Waterbody Type</th>
<th>Total Number</th>
<th>Minimum Setback</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perennial</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ephemeral</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermittent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Man-made drainage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*note: calculate the total number of each waterbody type occurring on the property.

4. What is the condition of the setbacks?
   - Good ☐
   - Fair ☐
   - Poor ☐

Fish and Wildlife Resources – It is recommended a conservation plan be in place and updated every five (5) years. A Resource Conservation District (RCD) plan or equivalent is acceptable. A grow operation should identify any sensitive fish and wildlife species present on the property and develop conservation practices to minimize impacts. Example BMPs would be incorporating predatory bird stands, protection of stream habitat, preservation of wetlands, and forest/woodland area management.

1. Has the operation conducted any biological surveys or studies?
   - Yes ☐
   - No ☐

   If yes, attach any surveys or studies.

2. What percent of the property is maintained as non-productive habitat (i.e. native and naturalized grasses, flowering plants, shrubs and trees, edges and corridors)?
   - >60% (□)
   - 30-59% (□)
   - 10-29% (□)
   - <10% (□)

   Attach map marked with percent of property maintained in non-production.
How the program works...

- Grower conducts self-assessment
- RCD follows up to verify information and scoring
- Operation given a rank (AA–D) based on score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land Use &amp; Conservation Measures</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Planting Setup</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Operation &amp; Maintenance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soil &amp; Sediment Control</td>
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<tr>
<td>Waste Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soil Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Materials Storage</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pest Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Equity &amp; Labor Management</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL:**

- **POINTS POSSIBLE:** 173
- **RANK:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>173-182</td>
<td>AA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>154-156</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>135-138</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>117-121</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102-103</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;102</td>
<td>Cannot be considered for this program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall ranking score for social equity and labor management and practices:

____ Points out of 16 Points Possible
Next Steps

- Review/feedback
- Beta testing w/ sample size of licensed growers (n=5)
- Finalization of verification program
- Implementation
- Review and update accordingly

Local adoption

Regional & Statewide adoption
Questions?

Devin Best
Executive Director
Upper Salinas – Las Tablas Resource Conservation District
65 S. Main Street, Suite 107
Templeton, CA 93465
(805) 434–0396 ex. 3196
www.us-ltrcd.org

Andrew Johnson
Project Manager
Upper Salinas – Las Tablas Resource Conservation District
65 S. Main Street, Suite 107
Templeton, CA 93465
(805) 434–0396 ex. 3175