



# Environmental Review **FAQ**

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## Frequently Asked Questions: Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR)

- **EIR** ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
- **CEQA** CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT
- **PEIR** PROGRAM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT



**1 What is the purpose of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR)?**

An EIR is required under the California Environmental Quality Act. The purpose of an EIR is to study the potential effects of a project or action on the environment, and consider measures to avoid or mitigate impacts. For CalCannabis Cultivation Licensing, the EIR will provide the analytical foundation for statewide cannabis cultivation regulations.

**2 Does the Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) cover both medical and adult-use (nonmedical) cannabis?**

**Yes**— With passage of the Adult Use of Marijuana Act in November 2016, the California Department of Food and Agriculture expanded its CalCannabis Cultivation Licensing program to include adult-use (nonmedical) cannabis cultivation activities.

**3 What is the focus and intended use of the Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR)?**

The PEIR is being prepared to comprehensively study the impacts of cannabis cultivation statewide and incorporate environmental protection measures into cannabis cultivation licenses. The PEIR is also intended to minimize the amount of duplicate information that may be required by agencies issuing individual permits or other approvals for cannabis cultivation. Such agencies include California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), other state agencies, and local jurisdictions.

**4 What environmental impacts were studied for CalCannabis Cultivation Licensing?**

The following natural resource areas have been analyzed in the Draft Program Environmental Impact Report to determine the environmental impacts of statewide cannabis cultivation licensing:

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources



- Energy Use and Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards, Hazardous Materials, and Human Health
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise
- Public Services
- Transportation and Traffic
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems



**5 What alternatives were considered in the Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR)?**

The Draft PEIR analyzed a reasonable range of potentially feasible alternatives to the proposed CalCannabis Cultivation Licensing program. As required, the range of alternatives considered include those that offer substantial environmental advantages over the proposed program, and may be feasibly accomplished.

**The following alternatives were evaluated in the Draft PEIR:**

- No Program Alternative
- No Natural Light Alternative
- No High-Intensity Grow Light Alternative
- Restricted Size Alternative

**6 Among the proposed regulations and the alternatives to those regulations that were considered in the Draft PEIR, which is considered the most environmentally sustainable?**

After evaluating all environmental aspects, the CalCannabis Cultivation Licensing program, as proposed, is considered to be the most environmentally sustainable approach to regulating commercial cannabis cultivation.

The program, as currently proposed, strikes a balance between various environmental issues and ensures that, with limited exceptions, the impacts of statewide cannabis cultivation would not be significant.

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It is important to note that the California State Legislature and the voters, in adopting the Medical Cannabis Regulation and Safety Act and the Adult Use of Marijuana Act, respectively, directed the California Department of Food and Agriculture (**CDFA**) to develop regulations specifically to address the environmental impacts of unpermitted cultivation.

These considerations, as well as consultation with **CDFA's** sister agencies (i.e., the Bureau of Medical Cannabis Regulation, the Office of Manufactured Cannabis Safety, the Department of Public Health, the State Water Resources Control Board, and the California Department of Fish & Wildlife) and California tribes, have guided the development of the proposed CalCannabis Cultivation Licensing program.

**7 Will the CalCannabis Cultivation Licensing program result in significant and unavoidable impacts to the environment?**

**No**— With implementation of environmental protection measures included in the proposed regulations, the impacts of the proposed CalCannabis Cultivation Licensing program are considered less than significant for all natural resource areas analyzed.

**8 Can the public submit comments on the Draft Program Environmental Impact Report?**


Public comments are strongly encouraged and are critical to analyzing the impacts of statewide cannabis cultivation on the environment. All comments will be carefully considered.

**9 How should comments on the Draft Program Environmental Impact Report be submitted?**

Comments may be submitted by mail or e-mail **on or before July 31, 2017**. Written comments can be mailed to:

 **California Department of Food and Agriculture  
CalCannabis Cultivation Licensing**

Attn: Amber Morris  
CalCannabis PEIR Comments  
1220 N Street, Suite 400  
Sacramento, CA 95814

 **Comments can be e-mailed to:**  
calcannabis.peir@cdfa.ca.gov



Comments also may be submitted verbally or in writing at **one of four public workshops** held on the following dates:

All meetings will be held from **6:00pm – 8:00pm**

**Tuesday, July 11**

Weaverville Veterans Memorial Hall  
101 Memorial Lane  
Weaverville, CA 96093

**Thursday, July 13**

Plumas County Fairgrounds  
204 Fairground Road  
Quincy, CA 95971

**Tuesday, July 18**

Monterey Marriott  
350 Calle Principal  
Monterey, CA 93940

**Thursday, July 20**

Hilton Mission Valley  
901 Camino del Rio S  
San Diego, CA 92108



**10 What type of feedback should be provided during the 45-day public comment period for the Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR)?**

The most effective comments describe what impact you are concerned about, and how or why the impact is harmful (e.g., how the impact affects people, water quality, etc.), significant (e.g., the severity of the impact), or foreseeable (e.g., the likelihood of the impact as a result of the project). Comments are most effective if they are accompanied by supporting information or documentation to assist the California Department of Food and Agriculture in building a base of “substantial evidence” to support the **PEIR** analysis.

**11 Will the California Department of Food and Agriculture respond to my comments?**

All substantive comments will be responded to in the Final Program Environmental Impact Report.

**12 If I submitted comments on the proposed regulations for CalCannabis Cultivation Licensing, do I need to submit comments again on the Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR)?**

The public comment period for the proposed CalCannabis Cultivation Licensing medical cannabis regulations **ended on June 14, 2017**, and were focused on providing feedback on the proposed regulatory requirements. The comment period for the **Draft PEIR** represents a separate public involvement opportunity specifically related to the environmental analysis of statewide cannabis cultivation, licensing, and the track-and-trace system. Comments on the **Draft PEIR** must be submitted during the 45-day comment period.

**13 What is the next step in the environmental review process?**

Comments received during the 45-day comment period for the Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (**PEIR**) will be collected, sorted, and carefully reviewed. These comments will help inform the development of a **Final PEIR**. All substantive comments received on the **Draft PEIR** will be responded to in the **Final PEIR**.

The chart below provides more information on the environmental review process.

## Environmental Review



For more information, please visit:  
[calcannabis.cdfa.ca.gov](http://calcannabis.cdfa.ca.gov)

