



COUNTY OF LAKE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
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11:00 a.m.
July 21, 2026

MEMORANDUM

To: Lake County Board of Supervisors

From: Mireya G. Turner, Community Development Director

Date: July 21, 2026

Subject: Recommendation of Revocation – Major Use Permit UP (18-38); Permittee: John Brosnan, authorizing commercial cannabis activity of up to 87,120 square feet of canopy area located at 11739 Old Spruce Grove Road, Lower Lake (APN 012-032-04)

Exhibits:

- A. Conditions of Approval
- B. Lease Agreement
- C. California Department of Cannabis Control Records Declaration
- D. Code Enforcement License History Table
- E. 2025 Inspection Report
- F. Code Enforcement Notice of Violation (ENF-25-1894)
- G. Agency Comment

I. Executive Summary

In accordance with Article 60 of the Lake County Zoning Code, the Community Development Director is hereby initiating revocation proceedings for Major Use Permit (UP 18-38); Permittee: John Brosnan, which authorizes 87,120 square feet (sf) outdoor commercial cannabis canopy on property located at 11739 Old Spruce Grove Road, Lower Lake (APN 012-032-04). Records indicate the operator, Jennifer Smith, engaged in commercial cannabis cultivation activities without possessing a valid California Department of Cannabis Control state license, thereby violating California state law, Lake County Zoning Ordinance Article 27 Uses Generally Permitted, and the project's conditions of approval.

Project Information

- Permittee / Property Owner: John Brosnan
- Lessee / Operator: Jennifer Smith
- Project Name: Canvas Farms
- Location: 11739 Old Spruce Grove Road, Lower Lake (APN 012-032-04)
- Major Use Permit Approval Date: March 28, 2019

II. Background

On March 28, 2019, the County of Lake Planning Commission approved Major Use Permit (UP 18-38) for John Brosnan, applicant and property owner, for commercial cannabis cultivation. The project included Conditions of Approval (Exhibit A) requiring the permittee to obtain all required

approvals and licenses, including but not limited to those issued by the California Department of Cannabis Control, as a prerequisite for lawful operation.

In 2019, John Brosnan granted Jennifer Smith permission to occupy and cultivate commercial cannabis within local and state guidelines for the property located at 11739 Old Spruce Grove Rd., Lower Lake, CA, and executed a lease agreement (Exhibit B) to this effect. Mr. Brosnan remained as property owner and permit holder, while the operator was Jennifer Smith according to Community Development Department records.

III. Violation Summary

On September 4, 2025, the Community Development Department was notified of an imminent execution of a search warrant to be conducted by the Lake County Sheriff's Office, Department of Cannabis Control (DCC), and California Department of Fish and Wildlife for unlawful cultivation of cannabis at 11739 Old Spruce Grove Road, Lower Lake (APN 012-032-04). Approximately 4,785 cannabis plants were destroyed on site and approximately 234 lbs. of processed cannabis were seized from the site. Following the completion of the search warrant execution, investigation, and related abatement activities by agency partners, Staff conducted an annual inspection of the site on December 4, 2025.

During the December 4, 2026, site inspection, staff confirmed the operator, Jennifer Smith, had cultivated 87,120 sf of commercial cannabis canopy at the (UP 18-38) site for the 2025 growing season and other violations of the approved permit conditions. On December 5, 2026, Code Enforcement issued a Notice of Violation (NOV) for case # ENF-25-1894. The NOV (Exhibit F) indicated that there was no active, valid state license as determined by the Department of Cannabis Control (Exhibit B) issued for the property.

In addition to cultivating without a state license, several items were identified for remediation. These violations include:

- Unpermitted structures
- Unpermitted hazardous electrical
- Unpermitted plumbing
- Open and outdoor storage/rubbish
- Documented violations from Department of Pesticide Regulation

FIGURE 1- Site Conditions



Source: Code Enforcement

FIGURE 2 – Site Conditions following Search Warrant Execution



Source: Staff photos from Annual Inspection Dec. 5, 2025

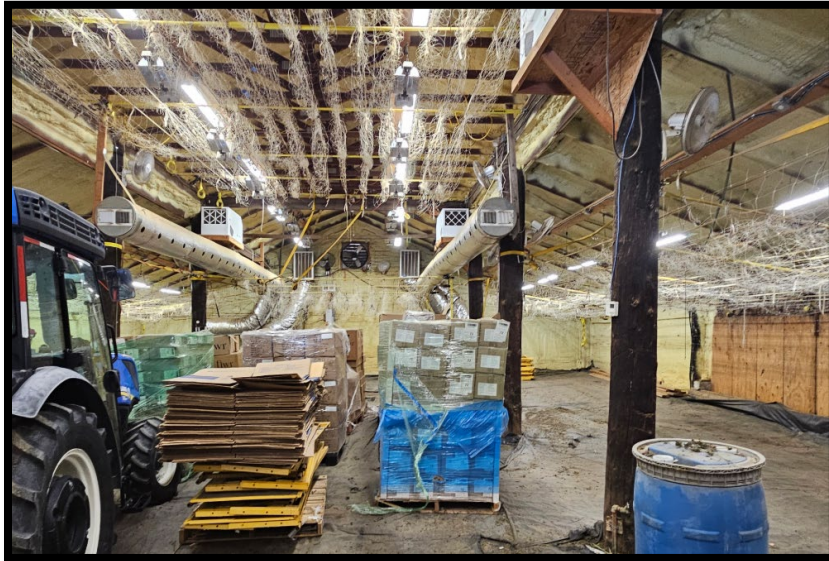
During inspection of one of the two processing structures, Code Enforcement observed a discrepancy between the building's exterior enclosure and its interior spatial footprint. Specifically, an auxiliary room was identified, featuring a door that was not integrated into or accessible from the interior of the primary structural layout. Code Enforcement staff expressed concerns about the additional room and requested to inspect the area. Jennifer Smith stated that the room was the occupied by property owner John Brosnan and not a part of the project. Staff requested access to the auxiliary room for inspection. Access was granted by Jennifer Smith.

Upon entry, the odor of cannabis was substantial. Staff observed hazardous electrical extension cord usage, unpermitted electrical installations, unpermitted plumbing, a freezer, a humidity control unit, tables, chairs, trimming materials and a large amount of cannabis including 118 medium size moving boxes, one clear tote, and 60 black and yellow storage totes containing cannabis in various stages of processing as noted within the Code Enforcement Notice of Violation (Exhibit F). When asked about the stored cannabis, Jennifer Smith stated that the DCC had embargoed the stored cannabis and she was currently waiting on instructions on how to properly dispose of it.

It is important to note that there was no embargo tape used by the Department of Cannabis Control to secure the cannabis. Typically, such tape, labeled "Embargo," is employed to identify products that have been embargoed. During the discussion regarding the disposal of the cannabis, Jennifer Smith expressed concern about destroying the material in the absence of DCC personnel to oversee the process. Code Enforcement advised that they would provide confirmation of disposal to DCC. See Figures 3 and 4 below.

Figures 3 – Processing Building

Interior



Source: Staff Site Inspection, December 4, 2025

Exterior of Processing Structure and Entrance to Auxillary Structure



Source: Staff Site Inspection, December 4, 2025

Auxillary Structure / Cannabis Storage

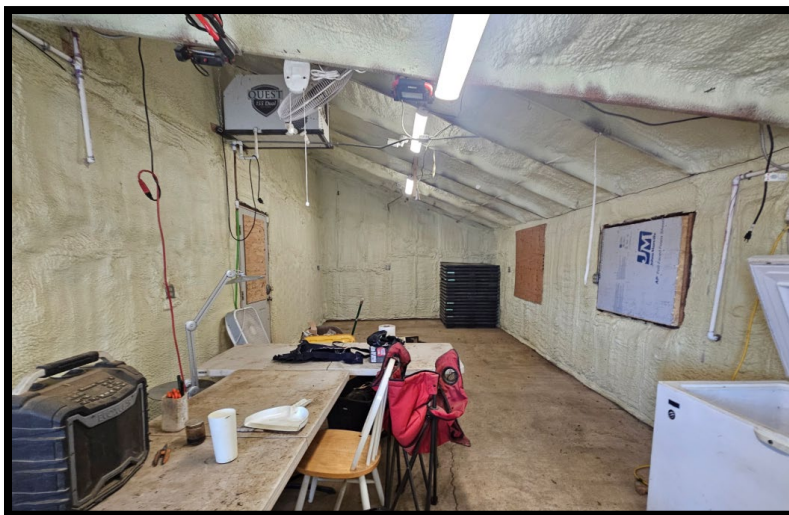


Source: Staff Site Inspection, December 4, 2025

On December 5, 2025, following the site inspection by County of Lake staff, Code Enforcement contacted the DCC to verify Jennifer Smith's claims of embargo. A DCC Special Investigator responded and stated there was no validity to Jennifer Smith's claim of embargo as the DCC had not communicated with her about cannabis products at the site. The Special Investigator further explained that any cannabis products located at the site were unlicensed (Exhibit G). The 2025 Planning Inspection Report (Exhibit E) indicated that there was no active, valid state license (Exhibit C and D) issued for the property, and that remediation efforts for the site were required.

On December 5, 2025, Code Enforcement required Smith to abate the stored cannabis and was present to view the destruction of the unlicensed cannabis. The cannabis was dumped on the ground, native soil/dirt was applied, then mixed and destroyed with a skid steer. The cannabis was rendered to waste, and the auxiliary storage room area that stored the boxes and totes of cannabis was cleared to ensure all containers had been removed in the presence of Code Enforcement staff.

Figures 4 – Code Enforcement Abatement on December 5, 2025



Source: Community Development Staff

Since the 2025 Planning Inspection, the Community Development Department's Code Enforcement and Building Safety Divisions have been working closely with property owner and permittee John Brosnan, for the required building permits and remediation efforts at the project site.

In addition to the items eligible for remediation, Staff has documented the following violations of State law, the Lake County Code, and use permit conditions of approval:

1. Failure to Maintain State License
The operator conducted commercial cannabis cultivation activities on-site during periods when no active State license was issued or in good standing with the California Department of Cannabis Control. Cannabis cultivation without a valid State license is not authorized under Article 27 of the Lake County Zoning Ordinance.
2. Violation of Conditions of Approval
Condition A. 5. requires compliance with State licensing. Operation without such licensure constitutes a direct violation of the approved use permit.

IV. Applicable Regulations

Pursuant to Article 27 - Uses Generally Permitted, of the Lake County Zoning Code, all commercial cannabis operations must comply with:

General Requirements:

- Lake County Zoning Ordinance Article 27 ii. General Requirements states: State licensure and permits as required. A person or entity shall not engage in the commercial cultivation of cannabis without first obtaining a Lake County minor or major use permit, a state cannabis cultivation license, and applicable permits such as from Department of Cannabis Control.
- All Conditions of Approval associated with the major use permit (UP 18-38).

Article 60 of the Lake County Zoning Ordinance authorizes the Community Development Director to recommend revocation or modification of the Major Use Permit where the Board of Supervisors may revoke or modify any minor use, major use, variance or development review permit or specific plan of development granted in accordance with the terms of this Chapter, on any one or more of the following grounds:

- Sec. 21-60.11 (2) That one or more of the terms or conditions upon which such permit was granted has been violated.
- That the use for which the permit was granted is so conducted as to be detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare or as to be a nuisance.

V. Analysis

1. The permittee has failed to maintain the required approvals by cultivating cannabis without DCC license(s).
2. The permittee has violated the Major Use Permit conditions of approval.

For these reasons, Staff is recommending the Board of Supervisors revoke Major Use Permit (UP 18-38).

VI. Findings

Staff recommends the following findings:

1. The permittee has exercised the Major Use Permit (UP 18-38) in a manner inconsistent with its Conditions of Approval;
2. The use is not in compliance with applicable State law; and
3. Grounds exist under Article 60 to revoke (UP 18-38)

VII. Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Board of Supervisors take the following actions:

- A. Find that initiation of revocation proceedings is warranted based on documented violations, including but not limited to:
 1. Failure to maintain required State licensure
 2. Violation of Conditions of Approval
 3. Unlawful operation of commercial cannabis activities
- B. Revoke Major Use Permit (UP 18-38) for commercial cannabis cultivation of 87,120 sf outdoor canopy located at 11739 Old Spruce Grove Road, Lower Lake (APN 012-032-04); Permittee: John Brosnan, based on the following findings:
 4. The permittee has exercised the Major Use Permit (UP 18-38) in violation of the project's Conditions of Approval;
 5. The use is not in compliance with applicable State law; and
 6. Grounds exist under Article 60 to revoke Major Use Permit (UP 18-38).

VIII. Sample Motions:

I move that the Board of Supervisors revoke Major Use Permit (UP 18-38) for commercial cannabis cultivation of 87,120 sf outdoor canopy located at 11739 Old Spruce Grove Road, Lower Lake (APN 012-032-04); Permittee: John Brosnan, based on the findings in the memorandum dated July 21, 2026 and direct staff to prepare Draft Findings of Fact.