



## DEPARTMENT REPORT

November 2017

### Agriculture

As the deadline approaches for the State of California to be issuing licenses for commercial cannabis activities, local government agencies are waiting with much anticipation for the release of commercial cultivation emergency regulations. CalCannabis announced that these regulations will probably be released in late November during the California Agricultural Commissioner's and Sealer's Association (CACASA) Secretary and Director's Conference last week. Once these regulations and associated EIR are adopted, CalCannabis will provide some direct outreach and training to Agricultural Commissioner staff on how to provide enforcement and oversight to the cannabis industry.

Commercial cannabis licenses issued by the state first require either local authorization or silence from the local agency on whether such a business is allowed pursuant to local code. The recently passed [AB133](#) removed the requirement of a 60 day local review of state license applications by local agencies. CSAC is working to bring the 60 day review period back via legislation. Until this is successful, state agencies can issue licenses to applicants immediately if they provide local authorization with their state application materials. The Bureau of Cannabis Control has stated that information is forthcoming on what will qualify as local authorization.

CalCannabis also has a number of good fact sheets and a [checklist](#) for getting your state license posted on their [website](#).

[SB1](#), which increases gas taxes to those that purchase gasoline in the State of California, will result in an increased gas tax distribution to Agricultural Commissioner's Offices beginning with the disbursement in April 2019. Our offices receive a portion of unclaimed gas tax dollars for agricultural programs under the assumption that not all agricultural producers file for refunds on gas taxes paid on fuel purchased for agricultural production, which is exempt from taxes due to these activities occurring off-road. Whether these funds ever materialize is still in question as several repeal initiatives have begun on the tax increase.

All county inspector and biologist [licensing exams](#) are now available online. This allows applicants to test at any time instead of four written exam cycles. Our local office is now also authorized to administer these exams. So far in 2017, the California Department of Food and Agriculture has recorded 11,151 online exams statewide. This accessibility will hopefully widen the pool of candidates for inspector and biologist positions.

### Agriculture Legislation of Interest

#### [AB1687](#) – Pesticides: Use of Anticoagulants

This bill would expand the current list of pesticides defined as anticoagulants in the State of California, and would prohibit the use of such pesticides statewide in most cases outside of agricultural use. Anticoagulants are used extensively in rural areas such as ours for rodent control, and this bill would prohibit such use if not linked to agricultural production. Inyo and Mono Counties consistently lead the state in Hantavirus occurrence and illness, and record the presence of other rodent-borne illnesses such as plague every year.

This bill was initially presented as bill to amend regulations for Certified Farmers Markets, but was gutted and replaced with the current text.

## Weights and Measures

Several interesting weights and measures topics were discussed during the CACASA conference. One of these topics was a company installing self-serve beverage dispensers in California called "[Pour My Beer](#)". These dispensers claim to provide a certain quantity of beer or wine, but testing indicates that the variation in density from one type of beer or wine to another creates some discrepancies in what is actually dispensed. This company has been contacted by the State Department of Measurement Standards and is currently working to improve design and gain California type-approval. Once type-approved, equipment will be legal to install and will be sealed by the county annually in the same way as gas pumps and other measuring devices.

Electric charging station testing was another interesting topic that came up during the conference. Many of these stations already exist throughout the state, but no protocol existed until recently to test such devices to ensure accuracy. By early next year equipment will be available for counties to test electric stations, but these devices will cost a bit over \$18,000. Several other manufacturers of testing equipment are on the way, and county sealers hope this will bring costs down.

Another interesting facet of the electric charging station industry is that companies were sometimes charging by time instead of kilowatt hour. Since charging stations can have various types of installations and feeds with different amperages, an hour at one station may not provide as much electricity as an hour at another station. One way to conceptualize this is to imagine filling your car with gasoline from time to time, with different stations having different output of gallons per minute, AND paying for minutes of fueling rather than gallons of fuel.

## Mosquito Abatement

Some of the mosquito control seasonal employees were extended to mid-October this year due to the busy season. We are finally at the end of mosquito production for this calendar year. The record breaking 2017 season yielded the following data:

<b>6,461</b>	<b>Average number of mosquitoes trapped annually 2011-2016</b>
<b>57,399</b>	<b>Number of Mosquitoes trapped in 2017</b>
<b>0</b>	<b>Number of Human WNV cases prior to 2017</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Number of Human WNV cases 2017</b>
<b>94</b>	<b>Mosquito Pools submitted for disease testing in 2017</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Number of submitted pools that were WNV positive</b>

With the busy mosquito season over, full time staff has begun to focus their attention on repairing equipment that failed during the season, fabricating parts to retrofit new equipment in preparation for next season, and compiling data. Preparing new equipment for the field is an interesting process. Vehicles such as ATVs do not come ready to apply larvicides, but rather have to be custom altered to do so by adding seed spreaders and tanks. The spreader installation is shown in the picture to the right. Years of trial and error have resulted in staff knowing how to build ATVs for this purpose.

Interviews have been conducted for both a Field Technician and Project Coordinator. These fulltime positions will be shared with OVMAP and ESWMA.



Mosquito Abatement Legislation of Interest

AB523 – Drones: Pesticide Application

This bill allows for the application of pesticides by unmanned aerial vehicles if operators are licensed by the Federal Aviation Administration and the California Department of Pesticide Regulation. Late amendments restricted pesticide applications by drone to only mosquito and vector control programs. This bill was signed and chaptered.

Eastern Sierra Weed Management

The weeds field team took advantage of the mild fall weather this month and made their annual trip to a remote Camelthorn site outside of Tecopa. The site is the only known population of this difficult to control weed within Inyo and Mono counties, and one of only a handful in California. Field crews also finished the Pepperweed season along the Middle Owens River, winterized all the spray equipment and treated Tamarisk at the Granite Construction ponds outside of Bishop. In addition to the field work, staff attended several pesticide training sessions in order to renew professional certifications.

Interviews have been conducted for both a Field Technician and Project Coordinator. These fulltime positions will be shared with OVMAP and ESWMA.

November Important Dates

November 7  
Inyo BOS – Cannabis Ordinance

November 8  
Cannabis Community Outreach Meeting  
Olancho

November 10  
Veteran's Day – Office Closed

November 14  
Cannabis Community Outreach Meeting  
Big Pine

November 15  
Cannabis Community Outreach Meeting  
Bishop

November 16  
SCACASA Meeting  
Webinar

November 17  
Cannabis Community Outreach Meeting  
Tecopa

November 23-24  
Thanksgiving Holiday  
Office Closed