

GROWING GREEN for THE YUBA



2021 CANNABIS IMPACT SURVEY

WHY STUDY THE IMPACTS OF CANNABIS CULTIVATION?

Cannabis is a part of Nevada County culture for many and has been for decades. Cannabis cultivation provides residents with jobs and contributes to our local economy.

Nevada County's decision to legalize cannabis cultivation has the potential to create significant change within our community. In 2019, the urgency ordinance Nevada County adopted for commercial cannabis cultivation was intended to encourage compliance so as to mitigate a range of impacts from illegal cannabis cultivation, including environmental degradation.

Since the ordinance was put into effect, only 3% of the estimated 3,500 cultivators in Nevada County have achieved compliance. SYRCL released a survey in March of 2021 with several goals in mind. One was to better understand why more cultivators have not come into compliance. Another was to understand the challenges and barriers cultivators face when they do seek to come into compliance.

SYRCL also conducted the survey to understand how the everchanging landscape of cannabis cultivation is impacting the



community writ large, especially as cultivation expands throughout the watershed.

This work is part of our Growing Green for the Yuba program, which began in 2013. Acknowledging that cannabis cultivation is prevalent throughout the watershed, the program encourages cultivation that minimizes negative effects through educational initiatives and outreach. SYRCL began the Growing Green program because it aligns with our mission: to unite the community to protect and restore the Yuba River watershed.

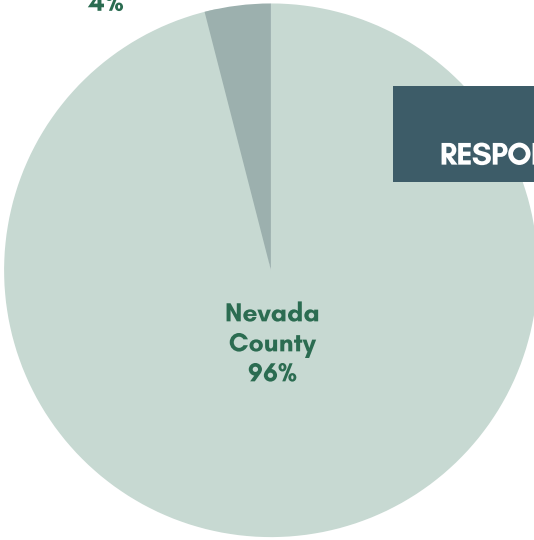
By sharing this data, SYRCL hopes to inform any revisions of the compliance process.

Unless and until compliance is more accessible, illegal grows will continue to proliferate, with limited opportunity to regulate damaging impacts to the watershed and the community.



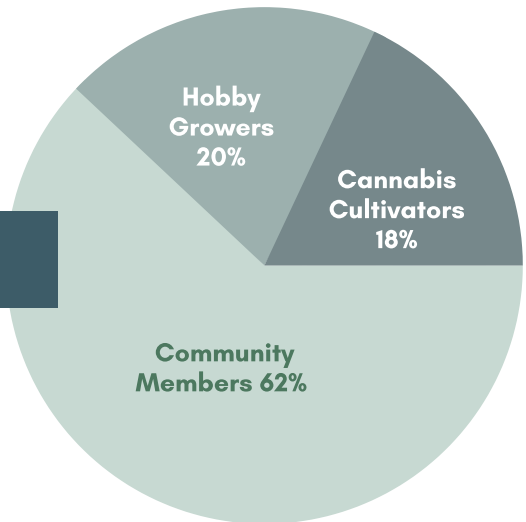
WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE SURVEY?

Sierra, Placer, or
Yuba County
4%

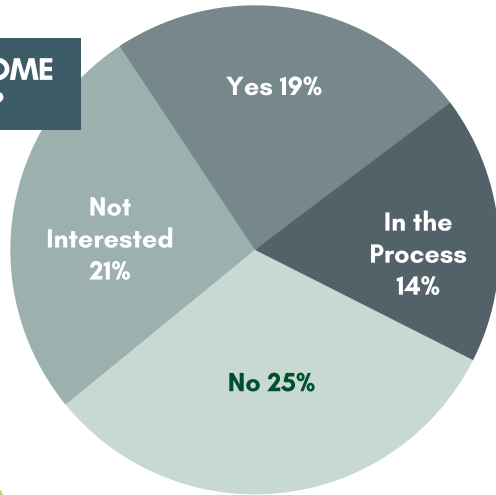


WHERE ARE
RESPONDENTS LOCATED?

RESPONDENT SELF-
IDENTIFICATION



HAVE CULTIVATORS COME INTO COMPLIANCE?



Why did people decide not to come into compliance?

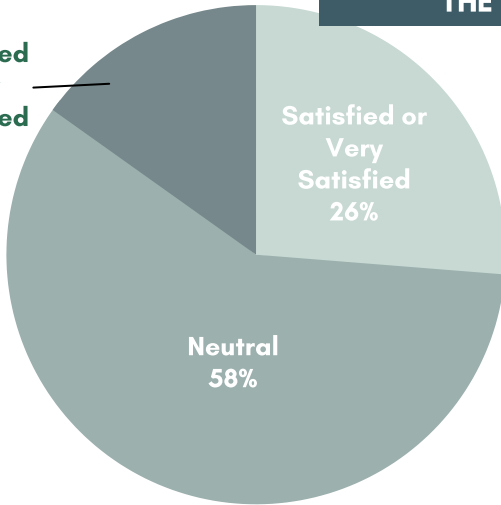
TOP THREE REASONS:

1. Regulatory burden (it's too complicated)
2. Cost
3. Fear/lack of trust in government institutions

SATISFACTION WITH COMPLIANCE PROCESS

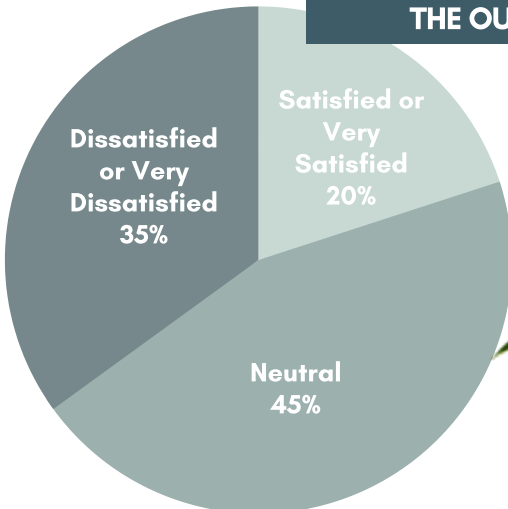
SATISFACTION WITH THE PROCESS

Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied
15%



SATISFACTION WITH THE OUTCOMES

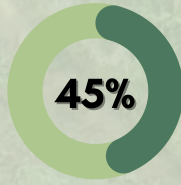
Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied
35%



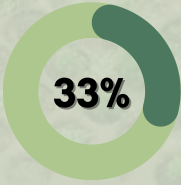
RESPONDENTS HAVE NOTICED:



Increased
road usage



Smell, clearcutting,
illegal grading



Noise, light, impacts
to wildlife, runoff



Water
diversions

PEOPLE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT:

1. **Environmental impacts** such as water diversions, pollution, and over-usage
2. **Cultural impacts** such as crime, traffic, and general ambiance
3. **Lack of fairness** due to non-compliant cultivators not facing consequences

TAKEAWAYS

A need exists to improve relationships between the those involved in developing the compliance process and those going through it.

Recommendation: Those involved in overseeing the compliance process should continue working to establish relationships and build trust.

The process of coming into compliance is not user-friendly.

Recommendation: Streamline the process to increase efficiency and provide support to cultivators.



Respondents of all types want to see greater enforcement of the rules in place.

Recommendation: Increase enforcement, especially in regard to large-scale illegal cultivation operations.

Respondents are concerned about the impacts of large-scale cannabis cultivation on local culture.

Recommendation: Focus enforcement efforts on egregious violations



For more resources and to learn more about sustainable cultivation practices, visit SYRCL at YubaRiver.org



To learn more about the cannabis industry within Nevada County, visit NCCannabisAlliance.org

Learn more about Nevada County's Good to Grow program and about coming into compliance, go to MyNevadaCounty.com



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