

Study finds medical pot farms draining streams dry

June 1 2014, by Jason Dearen

Wildlife officials say drought-stricken streams in Northern California's coastal forests are being sucked dry by water-guzzling medical marijuana farms—an issue that has spurred at least one county to try to outlaw personal grows.

State fish and [wildlife officials](#) say much of the marijuana being grown in northern counties under the state's medical pot law is not being used for legal use.

This demand is fueling an explosion in backyard and larger-scale pot farming, especially in remote Lake, Humboldt and Mendocino counties.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife biologist Scott Bauer is finishing a study of four watersheds where pot farms have proliferated since Proposition 215 passed in 1996.

He found about 30,000 plants growing in each area, taxing streams with imperiled salmon and steelhead.

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