EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AWARD

November 2026

EMPLOYEE: Summer Oquendo
UNIT: Cannabis Compliance and Enforcement
TITLE: Environmental Scientist
SUPERVISOR/TITLE: Lowell Cottle Senior Environmental Scientist Stormwater/Cannabis Compliance and Enforcement

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Since joining the Cannabis Compliance and Enforcement Unit in July 2025, Summer has become a valued asset to the team. Drawing on her wide-ranging background with the Forest Service and US Geological Survey - where she served as a Hydrologic, Engineering, and Plant Technician, as well as a Crew Leader - she quickly grasped unit procedures and takes direction exceptionally well.

Summer's field experience allows her to confidently lead inspections, execute thorough follow-ups, and manage multiple case closures simultaneously. With limited field staff, Summer has coordinated with State Board's Office of Enforcement to ensure coverage for short notice warrant inspections across the Sacramento and Fresno offices. She balances a strong sense of technical precision and attention to detail with an eager, collaborative mindset, frequently engaging with managers and peers to refine complex reporting standards.

Additionally, she leveraged her prior experience teaching GIS elevating our reporting deliverables by contributing final, high-caliber mapping products now standard across all unit reports. She has done a fantastic job of remaining curious and has gone on multiple stormwater inspections to broaden her background in sediment and erosion control and a general understanding of how other Water Board unit's function.

Summer's teamwork, reliability, attention to detail, and willingness to take on additional responsibilities make her an essential member of our Cannabis team.