



**COUNTY OF MENDOCINO**  
**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND BUILDING SERVICES**

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December 2, 2022

Edmond Kwan, Acting Audit Chief  
California Department of Fish and Wildlife  
1010 Riverside Parkway, Room 150  
West Sacramento, CA 95605  
Phone 916-373-6639  
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RE: COMPLIANCE REVIEW AND PROPAGATION FUND EXPENDITURES

Dear Edmond,

Please see the response and follow-up actions completed by the County of Mendocino related to the Fish and Game Code (FGC) Audit.

**Finding 1- Non-filing of Form 700, Statements of Economic Interest**

As a policy, all Fish and Game Commission ("Commission") members represented by Planning and Building Services (PBS) are required to complete the filing of the 700 Form. This has included the Fish and Game Commission, although they historically have not submitted this document. As a follow up measure, the Fish and Game Commission will now be reporting to the PBS Commission Services Supervisor and not working with a contracted "secretary". This should help to bring the Commission into compliance with department practices and policies, although the filing of the 700 Form may not be required by the FPPC.

**Finding 2- County's Practice Allowed Administrative Costs to Exceed the Annual Limit set in the FGC Section 13103(j)**

Historically, the Fish and Game Commission has been under the assigned duties of the Executive Office. Prior to reassignment to PBS, a Deputy CEO was responsible for budget preparation, contracts, grant expenditures, meetings, website maintenance etc. However, due to staffing shortages, the Commission was reassigned to PBS around Fiscal year 2011/2012. PBS staff was unaware of an Administrative Allowance in the code and simply copied previously approved budgets from the prior Liaison to the Fish and Game Commission, under the assumption that it was correct. This was an error on our part that, now, having learned of the annual limit to the Commission's budget, will not happen again. PBS Staff will ensure that the administrative costs do not exceed \$10,000 on the approved budget or in actual expenditures.

**Finding 3- The County Did Not Obtain Department Approval**

PBS was unaware of the requirement to obtain California Department of Fish and Wildlife ("Department") approval prior to grant expenditures. The Fish and Game Commission held several public meetings to discuss grant applications for approval, after which their Secretary

requested a Board of Supervisors meeting to recommend funding of the grants. These actions mirror those the County would take to award a grant or similarly approve a payment through a program and staff was unaware of the regulation requiring Department approval. With the finding above that the County did not obtain Department approval, PBS staff is now aware of this requirement and will not submit any items for approval by the Board that have not been approved by the Department for expenditure. To ensure future grant requests are reviewed appropriately and timely, PBS requests that a contact email for the Department be provided where future grant requests can be sent to for Department approval.

#### **Finding 4- Grants' Completion Could not be Substantiated**

<b>FY 16/17 Grants</b>				
<b>Grantee</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Deliverables</b>	<b>County Response</b>
Round Valley Indian Tribes	Mill Creek Streambank Stabilization and Riparian Corridor Development Project	\$10,000	Final Report, including invoice/receipts	Several attempts have been made to contact the grantee with no response. At this time, the County has prepared an invoice to the Round Valley Tribe for repayment of the grant funds to the Propagation fund.
Woodlands Wildlife	Education and Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation	\$2,500	Final Report, including invoice/receipts	An excellent accounting of funds spent with receipts, but no Final Report. One last attempt to contact the grantee for a Final Report will be made.
Reef Check CA	Rocky Reef Monitoring	\$8,500	Final Report, including invoice/receipts	Final report and documentation not consistent with requirements. Will need further invoices, receipts and proof of payments to approve this submittal. Also, the report was more of a cover letter and not sufficient to fulfill the "final report" document. One final outreach to the grantee is being made, after which an invoice will be sent to the organization for repayment to the Propagation fund.
Eel River Recovery Project	Town Creek Restoration Planning and Education Project	\$4,000	Final Report, including invoice/receipts	The Final Report and payment details were in excellent order. This grant can be closed out.
<b>FY 17/18 Grants</b>				
Ukiah Rod & Gun Club	Sacramento Pike Minnow Abatement Program	\$5,000	Final Report, including invoice/receipts	After several attempts some information was received by the County; however, it has been determined to be insufficient to meet project completion standards. The County will request additional information from the grantee. If no other information is provided, the County will prepare an invoice for repayment of the grant to the Propagation fund.

Watermen's Alliance	Urchin Removal Project	\$25,000	Final Report, including invoice/receipts	Documentation received and found to be compliant with standards for final reports, invoices and receipts. This grant can be closed out.
Reef Check Foundation	Reef Check Monitoring	\$10,450	Final Report, including invoice/receipts	Final report and documentation not consistent with requirements. Will need further invoices and proof of payments to approve this grant report submittal.

## **Finding 5- Unsupported Administrative Costs**

### **NOTE 1: Burn Symposium \$300 award to Farm Bureau**

Although the Burn Symposium did not have an approved agreement with the Board of Supervisors, it was discussed during the Board meeting by former 1<sup>st</sup> District Supervisor Carre Brown. Her family has been involved in farming and agriculture for many years and she is the Farm Bureau member that worked with the Commission Secretary to host the event. As such, Planning and Building Staff felt this was an approved use of Commission funds and reimbursed the Farm Bureau for the event. Staff will reach out to the Farm Bureau and see if any documentation exists from the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors related to the funding of the Burn Symposium that may validate the expense.

### **NOTE 2: Garage Billing and Gas Mileage for Vehicle**

The County has received the truck back from the Fish and Game Commission and it will no longer be used or stored at the County garage. The vehicle has been sent to surplus and no further billing to the Commission will occur. Also, a third party had been using the vehicle, which relates to the mileage and service fees; the amounts listed in the audit will be invoiced to the Ukiah Rod and Gun Club for their use of the truck. The total amount listed in Note 2 that equated to Garage billing is \$1,095.83; an invoice is being prepared to the Ukiah Rod and Gun Club.

### **NOTE 3: Matheson Tri-Gas**

The County has discovered that this charge relates to the filing and lease of oxygen tanks by the Ukiah Rod and Gun Club. As this was not a fee associated with the Fish and Game Commission, the County has prepared an invoice for all charges related to Matheson Tri-Gas, which will be sent to the Ukiah Rod and Gun Club for reimbursement.

### **NOTE 4: FGC Commissioner Paid for Seminar with no Supporting Documents**

After further review, it appears that Commissioner Vann was reimbursed for the seminar without proper supporting documents. It was sent by the Fish and Game Commission Secretary to the County for reimbursement, but should not have been completed without backup receipts, invoices and confirmations. Staff will contact Commissioner Vann and request a statement supporting the reimbursement of funds for the seminar and any other information he may have related to the payment. No future payments are authorized without the required backup documentation.

**NOTE 5: Mileage reimbursement to Commissioner**

Staff will contact Commissioner Neumann about this payment and see if there was an error on the date of the receipt. There was a scheduled Fish and Game Commission meeting on **March** 13, 2018, which would be consistent with the expense.

Respectfully,



Adrienne Thompson  
Administrative Services Manager  
Mendocino County Department of Planning and Building Services