

COASTAL CONSERVANCY

Staff Recommendation  
April 17, 2025

**JUG HANDLE CREEK FARM CABINS AND AMENITIES IMPROVEMENT AUGMENTATION**

Project No. 07-061-04  
Project Manager: Fanny Yang

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Authorization to disburse up to \$36,169 to augment the Conservancy’s previously authorized grant to the Jug Handle Creek Farm and Nature Center (JCFNC) to construct cabins, additional campground bathroom facilities and related infrastructure on the JCFNC property located in the community of Caspar, Mendocino County.

**LOCATION:** Caspar, Mendocino County

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EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1: [Project Location Map](#)

Exhibit 2: [May 5, 2022 Conservancy Staff Recommendation](#)

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**RESOLUTION AND FINDINGS**

Staff recommends that the State Coastal Conservancy adopt the following resolution and findings.

Resolution:

The State Coastal Conservancy hereby authorizes disbursement of an additional thirty-six thousand one hundred sixty-nine dollars (\$36,169) to Jug Handle Creek Farm and Nature Center (the “grantee”) to augment the grant previously authorized by the Conservancy on May 2, 2022, and a previously authorized augmentation of seventy-five thousand dollars (\$75,000) under the Conservancy’s Executive Officer’s delegated authority on October 25, 2023, for a total authorized amount of six hundred nineteen thousand five hundred sixty-nine dollars (\$619,569), to construct two cabins with restrooms and two new campground bathrooms, and to improve related infrastructure on the grantee’s property located in the community of Caspar, Mendocino County. This authorization is subject to the same conditions as the May 2, 2022 authorization.

Findings:

Based on the accompanying staff recommendation and attached exhibits, the State Coastal Conservancy hereby finds that:

1. The proposed authorization is consistent with Chapter 10 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code, regarding Lower-Cost Coastal Accommodations.
  2. The proposed project is consistent with the current Conservancy Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines.
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## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

### **PROJECT SUMMARY:**

Staff recommends the Conservancy authorize disbursement of an additional \$36,169 to Jug Handle Creek Farm and Nature Center (JCFNC) to augment the grant previously authorized by the Conservancy on May 2, 2022 (Exhibit 2), which was augmented by \$75,000 under the Executive Officer's delegated authority on October 25, 2023, for a total authorized amount of \$619,569, to undertake the JCFNC Cabins and Amenities Improvement Project (project), which consists of preparing final designs, engineering, coastal development permit amendments, preparing the construction bid package, construction of two cabins with restrooms and two new campground bathrooms, and improving related infrastructure on JCFNC's property located in the community of Caspar, Mendocino County.

With the grant, JCFNC has completed all planning work and constructed two campground cabins, each with one bathroom stall, and two new campground bathrooms. The remaining tasks are to finalize the septic system and the plumbing infrastructure improvements for the bathrooms.

Due to rising inflation and additional costs related to updated building code requirements, the original grant amount plus the \$75,000 augmentation approved by Conservancy's Executive Officer in October 2023 is insufficient to complete the project. Building code updates for the constructed cabins resulted in additional expenses for fire sprinklers, backup water tanks and pumps, and heat exchange systems for the two constructed cabins on site. The \$36,169 in added funding will allow JCFNC to complete the remaining construction of the plumbing and septic systems improvements, thereby completing the project, which started in 2022.

Completion of the project will greatly benefit the surrounding Mendocino community; the two new cabins with restrooms and improved bathroom facilities will provide more lower-cost serving accommodations along the coast and access to bathrooms will contribute to a more enjoyable experience for visitor groups camping or staying overnight on the property.

**Site Description:** The JCFNC site is comprised of 33 acres, and includes forests and meadows, nature trails, a century-old Victorian farmhouse, an eleven-site campground with one group campsite, bunkhouse with classroom, cabins, and a nursery and greenhouse. The site is located adjacent to Highway One just east of the town of Caspar in Mendocino County and was originally a dairy ranch supporting cows and sheep. The farmhouse, which currently provides lodging for up to 17 visitors, was built in the 1870's and the old creamery (a former dairy barn) serves as office space and a residence for the JCFNC caretaker. JCFNC was established at the same time as the Jug Handle State Reserve and is about a five-minute walk to the Reserve's

1.74 miles of trails and 1,000 acres of trail networks. There are opportunities for hiking, sunbathing, beach play, and fishing at nearby beaches and coastal headlands. JCFNC was intended to provide lodging and educational facilities to enhance public enjoyment of the Reserve.

**Grant Applicant Qualifications:** JCFNC is a nonprofit organization that provides environmental education programs for youth from Mendocino County and other areas, affordable lodging and camping for tourists and environmental groups, and a greenhouse and nursery where students, youth groups, and others can learn about and participate in native plant restoration projects. JCFNC staff is dedicated to improving the property and facilities at JCFNC and is experienced in handling and managing state grants. The Executive Director has managed numerous large and small state and federal grants totaling more than \$30 million over the course of her career; the Finance Director has managed state grants of more than \$800,000 for the Bunkhouse Expansion Project previously funded by the Coastal Conservancy’s lower-cost coastal accommodations program. The organization has sufficient cash reserves to be able to address cash flow for the proposed project. JCFNC has demonstrated its ability to work with subcontractors and permitting agencies to plan for facilities enhancement projects through its efficient implementation of Phases I and II of the JCFNC Enhancement Planning Project also funded by the Coastal Conservancy. JCFNC received a Coastal Development Permit for the project on May 28, 2015 and staff worked with JCFNC on the expansion of a 2,300 square foot bunkhouse and educational space. The bunkhouse and bathhouse were completed in 2020.

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA:**

The recommended authorization is consistent with the Conservancy’s Project Selection Criteria last updated on September 23, 2021, as described in the May 2, 2022 staff recommendation (Exhibit 2).

**PROJECT FINANCING**

<b>Coastal Conservancy (current authorization)</b>	<b>\$36,169</b>
Coastal Conservancy (2022 authorization)	\$508,400
Mendocino Community Foundation (2022)	\$2,300
JCFNC Board Donations (2022)	\$93,700
Previous Executive Officer Augmentation (2023 authorization)	\$75,000
<b>Project Total</b>	<b>\$715,569</b>

Unless specifically identified as “Required Match,” the other sources of funding and in-kind contributions described above are estimates. The Conservancy does not typically require matching funds or in-kind services, nor does it require documentation of expenditures from

other funders or of in-kind services. Typical grant conditions require grantees to provide any funds needed to complete a project.

The anticipated source of funds for this augmentation are funds appropriated to the Conservancy from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68, Public Resources Code Sections 80000-80173). Chapter 9 of Proposition 68 (section 80120-80121) allocates funds to the Conservancy to enhance and protect coastal and ocean resources, and, in particular, to grant funds to public agencies and nonprofit organizations for lower-cost coastal accommodations. (Public Resources Code Section 80120 (b)). Consistent with the purposes of this funding source, the additional funds for the augmentation will be for completing the remaining construction of plumbing and septic systems to provide lower-cost overnight accommodations on the coast. The project will be carried out in accordance with Chapter 10 of Division 21 regarding lower-cost coastal accommodations (see “Consistency with Conservancy’s Enabling Legislation” section below).

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S ENABLING LEGISLATION:**

The recommended authorization remains consistent with the Conservancy’s Enabling Legislation as described in the May 2, 2022 staff recommendation (Exhibit 2).

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S [2023-2027 STRATEGIC PLAN](#):**

Consistent with **Goal 2.1 Explore the Coast**, the proposed project will construct lower-cost cabins and bathrooms on the JCFNC property, providing a comfortable and enjoyable coastal experience for people and communities that face challenges accessing the coast.

Consistent with **Goal 2.5 Recreation Facilities & Amenities**, the proposed project will support enhancement of facilities by constructing new campground bathrooms and new cabins with bathrooms for visitors to use at JFCNC.

Consistent with **Goal 2.7 Explore the Coast Overnight**, the proposed project will create more cabins, to complement the campground bunkhouse, and hostel facilities at JCFNC, increasing the variety and amount of lower-coastal accommodations along the Mendocino coast.

**CEQA COMPLIANCE:**

On October 1, 2015, the Conservancy adopted the “Initial Study/Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Jug Handle Creek Farm and Nature Center Enhancement” Project (IS/MND) and authorized funding for the project. The project remains substantially unchanged from its description in the IS/MND, and no new environmental information or change in circumstances requires a re-evaluation of the potential environmental effects of the project. (14 Cal Code. Regs. Section 15162(b)). Accordingly, the proposed authorization remains consistent with the CEQA findings adopted by the Conservancy in connection with the October 1, 2015 authorization.