

COASTAL CONSERVANCY

Staff Recommendation
May 24, 2018

**JUGHANDLE CREEK FARM AND NATURE CENTER ENHANCEMENT
AUGMENTATION**

Project No. 07-061-03
Project Manager: Joel Gerwein

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Authorization to disburse up to \$250,000 to Jughandle Creek Farm and Nature Center (JCFNC) to augment the Conservancy's October 1, 2015 grant of \$600,000 for educational and lodging facilities to be constructed at the Jughandle property in the community of Caspar, Mendocino County.

LOCATION: Caspar, Mendocino County (Exhibit 1)

PROGRAM CATEGORY: Environmental Education and Public Access

EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1: [Project Location](#)

Exhibit 2: [JCFNC Staff Recommendation dated October 1, 2015](#)

Exhibit 3: [Building Plans](#)

RESOLUTION AND FINDINGS:

Staff recommends that the State Coastal Conservancy adopt the following resolution pursuant to Sections 31119 and 31400 – 31410 of the Public Resources Code:

“The State Coastal Conservancy hereby authorizes the disbursement of an amount not to exceed \$250,000 (two hundred fifty thousand dollars) to the Jughandle Creek Farm and Nature Center (JCFNC) to augment the Conservancy's October 1, 2015 authorization to disburse \$600,000 to construct educational and lodging facilities at the nature center. This authorization is subject to all of the conditions imposed upon JCFNC through the October 1, 2015 Conservancy authorization for this project (Exhibit 2). In addition, this authorization is subject to an additional condition, that the lodging facilities constructed utilizing these funds must be rented at affordable rates, as determined by the Executive Officer of the Coastal Conservancy.”

Staff further recommends that the Conservancy adopt the following findings:

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

1. The proposed project is consistent with the current Conservancy's Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines.
 2. The proposed authorization is consistent with the purposes and objectives of Section 31119 (Chapter 3) and Sections 31400 et seq. (Chapter 9) of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code, regarding educational projects and public access facilities, respectively.
 3. Public access facilities along the Mendocino coast at this location would serve greater than local public needs.
 4. JCFNC is an organization existing under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service Code whose purposes are consistent with Division 21 of the Public Resources Code."
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PROJECT SUMMARY:

Staff recommends the Conservancy augment the existing grant to Jughandle Creek Farm and Nature Center (JCFNC) to construct educational and lodging facilities by authorizing the disbursement of up to an additional \$250,000, for a total grant authorization of \$850,000.

In October 2015, the Conservancy authorized a grant to JCFNC of \$600,000 for accommodation improvements at JCFNC. The 2015 proposed project, described fully in the October 1, 2015 staff recommendation (Exhibit 2), included the construction of a bunkhouse that will provide visitor accommodations, a bathhouse, and additional septic facilities and improvements for these facilities and for the existing lodging facilities at JCFNC. JCFNC completed the project designs and permitting for the improvements (Exhibit 3), and put the project out to bid in early 2018. Unfortunately, construction costs increased significantly since the Conservancy's 2015 authorization, and the bids received in March and April 2018 were well over the project cost estimates, necessitating a change to both the budget and scope of the proposed project. Due to the increase in costs, staff recommend the Conservancy-funded project will include only the construction of the bunkhouse, which will provide two "family" rooms and two bunkrooms, with a total of 25-28 beds available at lower-cost coastal accommodation rates. The building will also provide classroom space. Development of the bunkhouse will allow the project to move forward while permits, plans, and matching funds remain able to assist in implementation of the project. Construction of the bunkhouse will also enable the nature center to provide barrier-free overnight accommodations, which are currently unavailable.

JCFNC will develop the bathhouse and septic improvements with match funding raised from private donations. JCFNC has already raised the needed private funding for construction of the bathhouse and septic system, and intends to complete these project elements in the near future.

Staff recommend the additional condition that the bunkhouse be rented at affordable rates to address the Conservancy's recent update to its Strategic Plan. As discussed below, Objective 3E of the Conservancy's 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, encourages funding the construction of low cost visitor accommodations along the coast. Conservancy staff are currently working on detailed criteria for defining "low cost accommodations" tied to local conditions and economic constraints. Therefore, staff recommends the final determination of how this goal is achieved be delegated to the Executive Officer.

Site Description: The project area is fully described in the October 1, 2015 staff recommendation (Exhibit 2).

Project History: The project history is fully described in the October 1, 2015 staff recommendation (Exhibit 2).

PROJECT FINANCING

Grant Augmentation

Coastal Conservancy \$250,000

Original Grant

Coastal Conservancy \$600,000

Jughandle Creek Farm and Nature Center \$200,000

Total Project Costs \$1,050,000

The expected source of Conservancy funds for this project is the FY 2015 appropriation to the Conservancy from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Act of 2002 (Proposition 40, Public Resources Code Section 5096.600, et seq.). This is the same funding source used for the October 1, 2015 authorization, and the project remains consistent with this funding source.

Proposition 40 requires the Conservancy to give priority to grant projects with matching funds and JCFNC has raised \$200,000 for construction of the bath house and septic system as discussed above.

The project is supported by the contribution of funds and in-kind donations from a variety of other sources. Individual donations will fund additional rainwater storage and improvements to the nursery area’s irrigation system. Additional in-kind donations from AmeriCorps volunteers and Cal Fire crews will be used to make landscape improvements and control invasive plants at JCFNC. Consistent with the Conservancy’s prioritization requirements for using Proposition 40 funds, the project will provide a significant non-state match, as described above.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S ENABLING LEGISLATION:

The JCFNC project is undertaken pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 31119 of Chapter 3 and Chapter 9 (Public Resources Code Sections 31400 and 31410) of the Conservancy’s enabling legislation, and remains consistent with the purposes of these Chapters as described in the October 2015 staff recommendation (Exhibit 2).

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S ACCESS PROGRAM STANDARDS:

The project remains consistent with the Conservancy’s Access Program Standards, as described in the October 1, 2015 staff recommendation (Exhibit 2).

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S 2018-2022 STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS & OBJECTIVES:

Consistent with **Goal 3, Objective 3E** of the Conservancy's 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, the proposed project will fund the construction of low cost visitor accommodations along the coast.

Consistent with **Goal 2, Objective 2A**, the proposed project will expand opportunities for barrier-free access to and along the coast.

Consistent with **Goal 2, Objective 2D**, the proposed project will fund construction of new facilities to increase and enhance coastal recreational opportunities.

Consistent with **Goal 4, Objective 4C**, the proposed project will improve a regional environmental education center that educates the public about environmental issues affecting the coast and inland watersheds.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA & GUIDELINES:

The project remains consistent with the Conservancy's Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines, as described in the October 1, 2015 staff recommendation (Exhibit 2).

CONSISTENCY WITH LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM POLICIES:

The project remains consistent with local coastal program policies, as discussed in the October 1, 2015 staff recommendation (Exhibit 2).

COMPLIANCE WITH CEQA:

The previous staff recommendation (Exhibit 2) discusses CEQA compliance. The project remains unchanged. Conservancy staff filed a Notice of Determination for the project on August 3, 2015.