

DIVISION OF ADULT OPERATIONS
CALIFORNIA CORRECTIONAL CENTER

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July 23, 2007

Glenn Pavlovic, Foreperson
Mendocino County Grand Jury
P.O. Box 629
Ukiah, CA 95482

RE: RESPONSES TO GRAND JURY REPORTS

Dear Mr. Pavlovic:

In regard to the findings of the Grand Jury Report of June 7, 2007, I agree with the findings.

Recommendation Number ■ has been implemented. The schools, special districts, city and county departments have been contacted and informed of the services available to them from our two Mendocino County Conservation Camps Parlin Fork and Chamberlain Creek.

Thank you for your input and recommendations. If you have any further questions or comments, please contact me at (530) 257-2181, extension 4104, or you may contact Marty Aston, Associate Warden (A), Camp Division at extension 4470.

Sincerely,


K. PROSPER
Warden

c: M. Aston, Associate Warden, Camp Division
J. Nixon, Camp Commander, Parlin Fork
J. Pool, Camp Commander, Chamberlain Creek

PARLIN FORK AND CHAMBERLAIN CREEK CONSERVATION CAMPS

June 7, 2007

Summary

In accordance with the mandate of the California Penal Code §919 (b), the 200612007 Mendocino County Grand Jury visited the Parlin Fork and the Chamberlain Creek Conservation Camps. The camps provide a valuable resource for fighting wildfires. Additionally the camps provide many opportunities for inmate education and development.

Background

The camps in Mendocino County, combined, have a maximum population of 220 inmates, who are minimum custody offenders with an average placement stay of one to two years. Parlin Fork and Chamberlain Creek Conservation Camps are located on Highway 20 in Jackson State Demonstration Forest, between Fort Bragg and Willits. There are 38 Conservation Camps in the State of California that function under the direction of the California Department of Corrections (CDC) and in partnership with CalFire (CF). Each camp has a CF division chief and ten fire crew captains.

There is a strong emphasis on physical fitness. After careful screening each inmate must pass a one-week physical fitness training class followed by two weeks of training in fire-safety, fire suppression, and ongoing physical fitness. Each fire crew has 17 inmates supervised by a CF officer. Fire crews work 12 hour shifts or longer during fire season, under extreme conditions, often in steep terrain, wearing heavy, insulated clothing and carrying 30 pound packs of equipment in high heat and under difficult breathing conditions.

When they are not fighting fires, the crews work eight hours a day doing community service projects under the supervision of the CF, or they work within the camps. While in the camps they are under the supervision of CDC officers.

Methods

The Grand Jury visited both camps, which included a guided tour of all the facilities, and a thorough discussion of camp operations with both camp commanders and fire chiefs.

Findings

1. Parlin Fork operates their own sawmill and provides lumber for various projects.
2. Chamberlain Creek has a complete wood working shop and makes many types of cabinets and signs for city, county, and State government.
3. Opportunities exist at the camps for continuing education and skills development:

- a. GED certificates can be obtained through a supervised and facilitated mail order program;
 - b. Important skills are developed through operating equipment and machinery at the lumber mill at Parlin Fork, in the cabinet-making shop at Chamberlain Creek, and in the vehicle and maintenance repair shops;
 - c. In one noteworthy instance, an inmate was able to earn a Grade 2 license to operate the Parlin Fork water treatment plant.
4. At the time of the inspection of the Parlin Fork camp, the Grand Jury witnessed the annual administration inspection of the inmates, and equipment. This was all in advance of, and to prepare for, the coming fire season. The procedure included the comprehensive inspection of each individual's safety clothing, tools and equipment, and their understanding of the methods and dangers of fighting fires. The crew buses and all other fire fighting equipment were also inspected.
 5. At both camps the symbiotic relationship between the CDC and CF was clearly evident.
 6. The Mendocino County Bookmobile serves both camps and is highly valued by the inmates.

Recommendations

The Grand Jury recommends that:

1. schools, special districts, city and County departments fully utilize the services of both conservation camps. (Findings 1, 2)

Comments

The success of the camps can be attributed to the good relationship between the California Department of Corrections and CalFire, as represented by the cooperative efforts of their respective commanders at each camp.

The conservation camp system is advantageous for both the County and the inmates. It is evident that more camps would be of benefit to the County.

Response Required

None

Response Requested

Director, Parlin Fork Conservation Camp, California Division of Forestry (All Findings; All Recommendations)

Director, Chamberlain Creek Conservation Camp, California division of Forestry (All Findings; All Recommendations)

Director, California Department of Corrections (All Findings; All Recommendations)