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TRINITY COUNTY
SUPERIOR COURT

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CLERK OF THE SUPERIOR COURT
COUNTY OF TRINITY
BY: STACI WARNER, DEPUTY CLERK

**TRINITY COUNTY GRAND JURY
2009-2010**

**Judicial Committee
JUR2009-2010-002
Final Report**

TRINITY RIVER CONSERVATION CAMP

Approved May 18, 2010



Ronald D. Ward

*approved
June 7, 2010*

2009-2010 Trinity County Grand Jury

Judicial Committee

Trinity River Conservation Camp

Summary

California Penal Code Section 919(b) mandates that the Grand Jury review all public prison facilities within the County annually. Six members of the Grand Jury visited the Trinity River Conservation Camp on November 16, 2009.

Background

Trinity River Conservation Camp (TRCC) was opened in 1988. The inmates at this facility are under the direction of the High Desert Correctional Facility in Susanville, California. This camp is managed by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire) and the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR). The inmates are not sent to a camp in a county where their crime was committed, and inmates are not considered for transfer to a camp facility if their crime involves rape, molestation, or violence of any kind. Inmates that parole from the camp are returned to the area where they were arrested.

The Camp inmate capacity is 136, with 127 present at the time of the visit. There are six to seven new inmates each month. There are eight Correctional Officers, one Sergeant and one Lieutenant. Cal Fire is funded for 12 captains, one Division Chief and one part-time Battalion Chief. There are two Correctional Officers and one Supervisor on duty with three to four Cal Fire employees onsite at all times.

The camp is a minimum-security facility. There are no fences or security camera systems, but the camp boundaries are clearly marked. Weapons are not permitted at the Camp. Roll call is taken each morning, and there are evening bed checks. Incoming and outgoing mail and phone calls are monitored. Religious services are provided.

Inmates can request assignment to a camp. They are interviewed and will be assigned if they qualify. A day's work can reduce their sentence by three days. They receive a minimum of \$1.00 an hour while working on a fire. The money inmates earn is kept at Susanville and can be used to purchase commissary items. The inmates learn a routine, something that most have not had to do at any time during their life. The treatment of the inmates is firm, fair and consistent, emphasizing good communication. Inmates work five days a week. The average length of stay is 18 months, but it can range from ten months to four years.

There are 32 camps statewide, only two of which house females (Malibu and Rainbow). There are 18 in the Northern Region. This is camp CC #3.

The inmate firefighters receive 67 hours of firefighting training before they are assigned to a camp. While at the camp they can learn other skills including handling a chainsaw, sawmill skills, carpentry, food preparation. There is an on-site water treatment plant, and inmates who work the plant can earn a Water Treatment Plant certification.

As well as firefighting, inmates work throughout the County on such projects as The Golden Age Center, the Oregon Mountain Burn Rehabilitation, clean-up along 299 after the Whiskeytown Fire, Fuels Reduction, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) spring campground clean-up, snow removal, grounds clean-up at schools and parks, etc. If snow strands them in the camp during winter, the inmates will still be kept busy with snow removal and maintaining the grounds. They do not compete with any local small businesses.

The camps are considered "Conservation" because they partner with the Resource Conservation District (RCD), BLM, Fish and Game and the Forest Service; all agencies with a conservation mission. There is a charge of \$200 per crew per day plus an administration fee. TRCC attempts to get reimbursement for services whenever possible. A Job Analysis Form (JAF) is completed for each project. Before starting the project the Camp Commander and Cal Fire Division Chief review the JAF and a complete file is kept for each project. Work crews are deployed daily. Cal Fire is sensitive to the fact that they have to look good and everyone on a crew has to be able to pull his weight.

Incoming inmates are given an orientation. They are trained, learn new skills and there is follow-up to see that the job is completed. Inmate crews are assigned under a Cal Fire Captain who sets the expectations. A crew is from 12 to 17 inmates from the camp. They can staff six crews and a mobile kitchen. A crew will bunk together in a dorm so if they are called out at night they do not disturb the whole camp. If expectations are not met an inmate will be written up, the final action being dependent on the severity of the infraction. They could have a hearing, lose some of the time they have earned, or could be sent back to Susanville.

Within the crew there is a leadership chain. There are some specific jobs that earn more money or require less supervision. The rules include no public contact. They are allowed only appropriate conversation while on a job, which could include discussion of fire issues or danger concerns but never private conversation.

The camp is governed by Title 15 Crime Prevention and Correction of the State of California Code of Regulations, Div. 3 Rules and Regulations of Adult Institutions, Programs and Parole, Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

There is a Grievance Policy and only one had been filed at the camp during the last six months.

The Cal Fire Captains undergo training regarding Title 15. They are given a tour of Susanville and are trained on some of the problems they are likely encounter. All Inmates are OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) trained. On the first week of May each year at Ishi Conservation Camp there is a fire exercise for recertification. All Cal Fire and CDCR Staff are CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation) certified.

Method of Investigation

Members of the Grand Jury visited the Conservation Camp on November 16, 2009. Jury members were greeted and escorted by the Camp Division Chief from Cal Fire and the Lieutenant from CDCR. They provided an overview of the camp, chain of command and the duties of the staff.

The Grand Jury members were provided with a meal representative of the dinners served to the firefighters. It is a high-protein and high carbohydrate meal to maintain energy levels. While in the camp the inmates receive three meals a day consisting of a cooked breakfast, a sack lunch and a cooked dinner.

During the camp tour the Grand Jury members visited all areas of the camp. Inmates maintain the facility while receiving training during that maintenance. There is emphasis on skill development in areas such as automotive and upholstery repair, metal/wood shops, saw shop, and a sawmill. They are trained in fire-suppression, fire-prevention, and community assistance. The inmates also run a small mill where they cut and prepare lumber for sale or barter with other camps throughout the state.

Discussion

To date the Governor has exempted Cal Fire from budget cuts, however, they have sustained a 15% reduction in their fleet and they will feel the pinch as their vehicles are aging. The Department of Corrections has already felt the effects of this reduction.

This camp is a well-maintained minimum-security facility, providing basic skill training for inmates in the last 24 months of their sentence. The training these men receive includes keeping the camp and their living accommodations neat and clean. Inmates learn how to raise vegetables and flowers, prepare and serve meals, and operate the firefighter mobile kitchen.

Findings/ Recommendations

Finding 1:

TRCC is available to work on projects for non-profit organizations or government agencies. (County, State or Federal.)

Recommendation 1a:

It is recommended that the County check into utilizing the crews to provide supplemental help in appropriate community projects thereby saving the County funds that can be reallocated to other much-needed projects. This is not only a cost savings to the County but enhances the quality of life for the prisoners while contributing to the safety and upkeep of Trinity County.

Recommendation 1b:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors write a letter of commendation to Trinity River Conservation Camp for its support and commitment to the communities of Trinity County.

Responses Required

In accordance with California Penal Code 933.05 a response is required as indicated below.

<u>Respondent</u>	<u>Findings/Recommendation</u>	<u>Due date</u>
Board of Supervisors	1a, 1b	90 days
County Administrator	1a, 1b	60 days

The governing bodies indicated above should be aware that comment or response of the governing body must be conducted subject to the notice, agenda and open meeting requirements of the Brown Act.



TRINITY COUNTY

Board of Supervisors

P.O. BOX 1613, WEAVERVILLE, CALIFORNIA 96093
PHONE (530) 623-1217 FAX (530) 623-8365

December 30, 2010

Mr. Joe Hernandez Division Chief
California Dept. of Forestry &
Fire Protection
Trinity River Conservation Camp
P.O. Box 639
Lewiston, CA 96052

Dear Joe,

On behalf of the Trinity County Board of Supervisors, we would like to commend the Trinity River Conservation Camp for the years of providing outstanding services to the Communities of Trinity County.

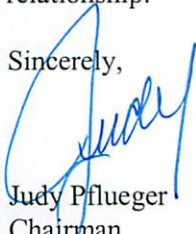
Not only have you assisted the schools, parks, airports, and other community entities with brush and tree removal, but the products of the "on location sawmill" at the camp, also provided for picnic tables that were class A.

The quality of the fire protection your crews provide is outstanding. During our many fires in Trinity County, the crews have shown professionalism that compares with the "hot shot" crews and our communities are grateful.

Trinity River Conservation Camp has provided much needed help to the County and Communities while providing cost savings, hopefully enhancing the quality of life for the prisoners, and contributing to the overall fire safety due to their work in the field. We are appreciative and would ask that you thank the crews for us.

Joe, thank you for the cooperation and support and we look forward to many more years of this relationship.

Sincerely,


Judy Pflueger
Chairman

JUDY PFLUEGER
DISTRICT 1

JUDY MORRIS
DISTRICT 2

ROGER JAEGLER
DISTRICT 3

HOWARD FREEMAN
DISTRICT 4

WENDY OTTO
DISTRICT 5



TRINITY COUNTY

Office of the County Administrator

DERO B. FORSLUND

County Administrative Officer

P.O. BOX 1613, WEAVERVILLE, CALIFORNIA 96093-1613

PHONE (530) 623-1382 FAX (530) 623-8365

TO: The Honorable Anthony Edwards,
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court

FROM: Dero B. Forslund, CAO

SUBJECT: Response to Recommendations of 2009-10
Grand Jury Judicial Committee Final Report
Re Trinity River Conservation Camp

DATE: August 30, 2010

The Grand Jury Judicial Committee has requested a written response to their final report on the Trinity River Conservation Camp. In my capacity as County Administrative Officer, my response is as follows:

Finding 1:

TRCC is available to work on projects for non-profit organizations or government agencies. (County, State or Federal.)

Response: We concur

Recommendation 1a:

It is recommended that the County check into utilizing the crews to provide supplemental help in appropriate community projects thereby saving the County funds that can be reallocated to other much-needed projects. This is not only a cost savings to the County but enhances the quality of life for the prisoners while contributing to the safety and upkeep of Trinity County.

Response: The recommendation will be implemented this calendar year.

Recommendation 1b:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors write a letter of commendation to Trinity River Conservation Camp for its support and commitment to the communities of Trinity County.

Response: Recommendation will be reviewed with the Board for implementation.

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TRINITY COUNTY
SUPERIOR COURT



TRINITY COUNTY

Board of Supervisors

P.O. BOX 1613, WEAVERVILLE, CALIFORNIA 96093

PHONE (530) 623-1217 FAX (530) 623-8365

TO: The Honorable James Woodward,
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court

FROM: Trinity County Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT: Response to 2009-10 Trinity County Grand Jury
Judicial Committee Final Report
Trinity River Conservation Camp

DATE: November 16, 2010

J. Pflueger
Approved 12/17/10

The Grand Jury Judicial Committee has requested a written response to their final report on the Trinity River Conservation Camp. The Board of Supervisors' response is as follows:

Finding #1: TRCC is available to work on projects for non-profit organizations or government agencies. (County, State or Federal.)

Response: Agree.

Recommendation #1a: It is recommended that the County check into utilizing the crews to provide supplemental help in appropriate community projects thereby saving the County funds that can be reallocated to other much-needed projects. This is not only a cost savings to the County but enhances the quality of life for the prisoners while contributing to the safety and upkeep of Trinity County.

Response: Has been implemented. The County utilizes the crews from the Conservation Camp when appropriate.

Recommendation #1b: It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors write a letter of commendation to Trinity River Conservation Camp for its support and commitment to the communicates of Trinity County.

Response: Will be implemented. The Board will consider such a letter prior to the end of calendar year 2010.

JUDY PFLUEGER
DISTRICT 1

JUDY MORRIS
DISTRICT 2

ROGER JAEGLER
DISTRICT 3

HOWARD FREEMAN
DISTRICT 4

WENDY OTTO
DISTRICT 5

Findings/ Recommendations

Finding 1:

TRCC is available to work on projects for non-profit organizations or government agencies. (County, State or Federal.)

Recommendation 1a:

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Recommendation 1b:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors write a letter of commendation to Trinity River Conservation Camp for its support and commitment to the communities of Trinity County.

Responses Required

In accordance with California Penal Code 933.05 a response is required as indicated below.

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