

DIVISION OF ADULT INSTITUTIONS**CALIFORNIA CORRECTIONAL CENTER**

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July 27, 2020

James Glover
Foreperson
Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury
825 Fifth Street
Eureka, CA 95501

Dear Foreperson Glover:

The Eel River and High Rock Conservation Camps, California Correctional Center (CCC) and I, truly appreciate the recognition and positive feedback provided in this year's report. In order for the camp to operate successfully, a combined effort and due diligence must be put forth from our mission and California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). I have reviewed the recommendations within your report and have provided the following responses:

FINDINGS:

- F1: Respondent Agrees
- F2: Respondent Agrees
- F3: Respondent Agrees
- F4: Respondent Agrees
- F5: Respondent Agrees

RECOMMENDATIONS

R-1: *The Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury recommends the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation review their classification guidelines and housing score sentencing to ensure optimized use of Conservation Camps. This would provide benefits to the State and to inmates. These changes should be implemented by January 1, 2021.*

- The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation's (CDCR) minimum custody guidelines were revised in March of 2017. CDCR has been looking at the current screening criteria to increase the number of inmates that are eligible to participate in the camp program while ensuring public safety. CDCR has restructured the eligibility to include inmates with prior Sensitive Needs designations in an effort to provide that population with the same ability to reduce custody and allow them to the same credit earning that camp inmates are eligible for. Including inmates with prior Sensitive Needs designations will help optimize the use of Conservation Camps.

- The COVID outbreak, and other rehabilitative programs have created more challenges in placing inmates at camps. There is a large demand to provide additional rehabilitative services to the inmates prior to release. Such programs are the Male Community Rehabilitative Program (MCRP) and Alternative Custody Program (ACP) which allows the inmate to be placed in a program outside the institutions or from their homes up to 12 months prior to their release dates. Prior to the COVID outbreak we were in the process of implementing the Integrated Substance Use Disorder Treatment (ISUDT) program. This would require inmates with a history Substance Abuse participation in specific classes 15-24 months prior to their release. The MCRPs, ACPs, and ISUDTs have similar criteria to the camp program which competes with the pool of inmates eligible for camps. Additionally, these low level inmates with shorter sentences are the first to be looked at for expedited COVID-related release, and other sentence reduction efforts.

R-2: *The Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury recommends the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and Humboldt County Sheriff's Office coordinate to identify willing and qualified inmates for shorter work assignments that do not require extensive training. These discussions should be initiated by October 1, 2020.*

- Based on the recommendation in the report, CDCR and the Humboldt County Sheriff's Office are currently arranging to meet and discuss the possibility of entering into a County Boarder contract.

R-3: *The Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury recommends the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation request the California Legislature amend regulations regarding qualifications for Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT) to allow former inmates who have served twelve months or more in a CDCR Conservation Camp be allowed to earn an EMT certification. Recommendations to the legislature should be made by January 1, 2021.*

- The California Legislature has introduced Assembly Bill 1211. This bill would declare the intent of the legislature to enact legislation that would provide a career pathway to individuals with previous criminal convictions who have demonstrated rehabilitation and desire to work as firefighters. The proposed bill notes California has approximately 3,700 inmates working at fire camps under the Conservation Camp Program with 2,600 of those being fire line qualified. Volunteers must have "minimum custody" status, of the lowest classification for inmates based on their sustained good behavior in prison, their conforming to rules and participation in rehabilitative programming. After receiving valuable training and placing themselves in danger to defend the life and property of Californians, inmate firefighters face denials and rejections when attempting to find jobs as firefighters after their release. Many individuals who have demonstrated substantial rehabilitation are locked out of pursuing careers as firefighters with city and county

fire departments because of previous criminal records even after demonstrating completion of necessary training requirements.

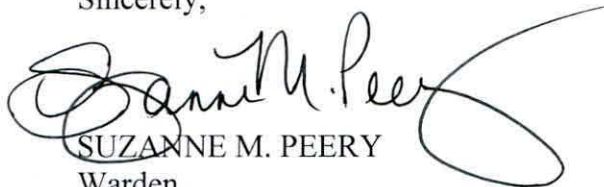
The California Legislature has introduced Assembly Bill 2147 Convictions: expungement: incarcerated individual hand crews. This bill would allow a defendant who successfully participated in the California Conservation Camp Program or a county inmate incarcerated individual hand crew as an inmate incarcerated individual hand crew member to petition to withdraw their plea of guilty or plea of nolo contendere and enter a plea of not guilty. *The bill would make persons convicted of specified violent felonies and sex offenses ineligible for relief.* The bill would ~~require~~ allow the court, if the defendant is eligible for relief, to dismiss the accusations or information against the defendant *at the court's discretion and in the interest of justice* and would release the defendant from all penalties and disabilities resulting from the offense, except as provided. In granting this relief, the bill would require the court to order the early termination of probation, parole, or supervised release if the court determines that the defendant has not violated any of the terms or conditions of their release during the pendency of the petition.

R-4: *The Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury recommends the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation establish, maintain, and publish data regarding Conservation Camp operations and effectiveness of rehabilitation. This program should be started by January 1, 2021.*

- Based on the Grand Jury recommendation the CDCR Camp Division has reached out to the Office of Research requesting information relative to the recidivism rates of those paroling from the camp programs compared to those offenders that paroled from an institution setting. Based on the request, the Office of Research has agreed to meet and discuss the possibilities of collecting recidivism data and what that would look like to ensure that the information was accurate and to ensure other factors have not influenced the data.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at 530-257-3701.

Sincerely,



SUZANNE M. PEERY

Warden

California Correctional Center