

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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W31a

January 25, 2012

FROM: Charles Lester, Executive Director
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SUBJECT: Proposed Awarding of \$26,000 in Unallocated Grant Funds from Sales of the WHALE TAIL License Plate (for Coastal Commission Meeting on February 8, 2012)

PROPOSED COMMISSION ACTIONS:

- A) Approve the following two targeted grants (totaling \$16,000):
- (1) Rural California Broadcasting Corporation (\$10,000)
 - (2) Tides Center (\$6,000)
- B) Approve the following action:
- (1) Reallocate \$10,000 to the competitive grants budget for Fiscal Year 2011/12.

(See page 3 for staff recommendation and motion.)

Introduction

The Coastal Commission's WHALE TAIL[®] License Plate was established as a mechanism through which the public can contribute funds to coastal and marine education programs in California. For each new plate that is sold, approximately \$15.00 is deposited in the California Beach and Coastal Enhancement Account (CBCEA). Annual renewal fees deposit \$20.00 per plate into the account. A portion of sales and renewal fees of the WHALE TAIL[®] Plate also are deposited in the Environmental License Plate Fund (ELPF), which supports environmental programs in other state agencies. According to DMV reports, as of December 2011 a total of 202,477 WHALE TAIL[®] Plates have been sold. Sales and renewal fees (plus miscellaneous other small fees) have contributed \$18.6 million to the CBCEA, and \$44.9 million to the ELPF. The additional fees that are charged for personalized plates go to the ELPF.

Previously Awarded Grants for FY 2011/12

At its September 2011 meeting, the Commission voted to allocate the \$541,000 FY2011/12 grantmaking budget as follows: five targeted grants totaling \$339,000, a temporary reserve of \$26,000 to be awarded later in the fiscal year, and the remaining \$176,000 for the competitive grantmaking program.

Before now, no action has been taken on the \$26,000 temporary reserve, which had been set aside to be available for potential opportunities which could arise. Since September, two opportunities have arisen that qualify for targeted WHALE TAIL[®] grants—that is, grants for high priority projects

that are an outgrowth of work begun under previous Commission grants or linked to existing Commission programs and goals.

The staff recommends that the Commission fund the two projects listed below, totaling \$16,000. The staff further recommends that the remaining \$10,000 be added to the FY2011/12 competitive grantmaking budget, for a new total of \$186,000.

(1) \$10,000 for the Rural California Broadcasting Corporation

The Rural California Broadcasting Corporation is the nonprofit organization that operates the KRCB television station (PBS affiliate Channel 22) and KRCB public radio station (NPR affiliate 91.1 FM) in Sonoma County. KRCB is collaborating with Coastwalk California to produce a series of audio podcasts called “Stories of the Coast: A Virtual Tour of the California Coast.” These podcasts are designed to provide visitors with a virtual expert docent speaking about a coastal spot’s history, science, or other aspects. The series will include a number of narratives about saving the California coast that have been collected as part of an oral history project with the Commission’s retired executive director, Peter Douglas, as well as other people.

Program History. The Rural California Broadcasting Corporation received a competitive WHALE TAIL[®] grant in 2006 to help develop a documentary about how the Marin and Sonoma County coastlines were saved for agriculture and open space despite plans for extensive development.

Proposal. Coastwalk California and KRCB are proposing to edit two previously recorded interviews with Peter Douglas to produce two audio podcasts. Each podcast would be at least ten minutes long. The podcasts would focus on the story of preserving two specific sections of the California coast and would be designed to be heard at the time those listeners are enjoying those locations, either by walking on the California Coastal Trail or driving along Highway One. (Others interested in learning more about the history of California’s coastal management program could download the segments as well.) Grant funds from the Commission would pay for audio engineering, editing, studio time, and posting the podcasts on the Internet. Future plans include making the podcasts available from smart phones. Funds would not be allocated toward conducting the interviews, as they have already been completed.

(2) \$6,000 for the Tides Center/Marine Education Project

The mission of the Marine Education Project (MEP) is to preserve and restore the biodiversity and health of California’s coastal and marine ecosystems through scientifically-supported community involvement, education, and action. Launched in 2001, MEP is a project of the nonprofit Tides Center, in partnership with the Commission’s Public Education Program. One of MEP’s primary programs is the Community-Based Restoration and Education Program (CBREP). CBREP is designed to promote community-based habitat restoration efforts in California. The Program is based at the Upper Newport Bay in Orange County, where it carries out on-the-ground activities to involve the public in habitat restoration and promote coastal stewardship. In addition, the program holds workshops and trainings for other community-based restoration groups and offers a high school curriculum called *Our Wetlands, Our World*.

Program History. CBREP was initially funded through money received from the *American Trader* oil spill settlement. Since then, CBREP has received approximately \$386,000 from corporate and foundation grants and has also received eight targeted WHALE TAIL[®] grants to support the program.

Proposal. In order to diversify funding sources and make the CBREP more self-sustaining, the Marine Education Project would hire a fundraising consultant to develop a fundraising plan with a

focus on individual donors; research prospective donors; set up a database to keep track of donor information; and conduct a one-day training for staff on donor cultivation.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

A. The staff recommends that the Commission approve the following two targeted grants:

- (1) Rural California Broadcasting Corporation (\$10,000)
- (2) Tides Center/Marine Education Project (\$6,000)

B. The staff further recommends that the Commission reallocate \$10,000 from the temporary reserve to the FY2011/12 competitive grants budget.

Motion: I move that the Commission approve and authorize the Executive Director to: a) enter into the appropriate agreements for two targeted WHALE TAIL[®] grants; and b) allocate an additional \$10,000 to the competitive WHALE TAIL[®] grantmaking budget, as listed in the staff report dated January 25, 2012, Item W31a.