

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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W29a

DATE: April 18, 2013

TO: Commissioners and Interested Parties

FROM: Charles Lester, Executive Director
Susan Hansch, Chief Deputy Director
Christiane Parry, Public Education Program Manager
Sylvie Lee, Grants Program Coordinator

SUBJECT: **Proposed Awarding of \$40,300 in Unallocated Grant Funds from Sales of the WHALE TAIL License Plate (for Coastal Commission Meeting on May 8, 2013).** The Executive Director recommends that the Commission approve the following proposed grant for Fiscal Year 2012/2013.

SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Approve the following competitive grant:

- (1) Navarro-by-the-Sea Center for Riparian and Estuarine Research (\$40,300)

I. MOTION AND RESOLUTION

Motion:

*I move that the Commission **approve** the funding allocation set forth in the staff recommendation.*

Staff recommends a **YES** vote on the foregoing motion. Passage of this motion will result in authorization of the Executive Director to enter into the appropriate agreement for disbursing the available funds. The motion passes only by affirmative vote of a majority of the Commissioners present.

Resolution:

The Commission hereby approves and authorizes the Executive Director to enter into the appropriate contract with Navarro-by-the-Sea Center.

II. INTRODUCTION

The California 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 \$13.86 is deposited in the California Beach and Coastal Enhancement Account (CBCEA). Annual renewal fees deposit approximately \$19.71 per plate into the account. Additional funds are deposited in the Environmental License Plate Fund (ELPF), which funds environmental programs in other state agencies. As of March 31, 2013, a total of 212,694 license plates have been sold. WHALE TAIL[®] License Plate sales and renewal fees (plus miscellaneous other small fees) have contributed \$20.7 million to the CBCEA, and \$50.4 million to the ELPF. (The additional fees that are charged for personalized plates go to the ELPF.)

California Vehicle Code Section 5067 dictates how the funds raised by sales of the WHALE TAIL[®] plate and deposited in the CBCEA account are to be used:

“Upon appropriation by the legislature, the money in the account (CBCEA) shall be allocated by the Controller as follows: (A) First to the California Coastal Commission for expenditure for the Adopt-A-Beach program, the Beach Cleanup Day program, coastal public education programs, and grants to local governments and nonprofit organizations for the costs of operating and maintaining public beaches related to these programs.” (B) Second, from funds remaining after the allocation required under subparagraph (A), to the State Coastal Conservancy for coastal natural resource restoration and enhancement projects and for other projects consistent with the provisions of Division 21 (commencing with Section 31000) of the Public Resources Code. (As amended in 2004 in Budget Trailer Bill SB 1107.)

Previously Awarded Grants for FY 2012/13

At its August 2012 meeting, the Commission voted to allocate the \$798,000 FY2012/13 grantmaking budget as follows: six targeted grants totaling \$364,840, a temporary reserve of \$45,000 to be awarded later in the fiscal year, and the remaining \$388,160 for the competitive grantmaking program. Subsequently, at its February 2013 meeting, the Commission approved 23 competitive grants totaling \$388,160.

Also in August 2012, the Commission voted to allow the Executive Director to allocate funds in the temporary reserve to one or more of the approved targeted grants if the reserve was not otherwise needed and the recommended funding levels turned out to be insufficient. In October 2012, the staff determined that an additional \$4,700 from the reserve was needed to supplement grants supporting the Kids' Adopt-A-Beach School Assembly Program and Beach Cleanup program. This amount was approved by the Executive Director, leaving a balance of \$40,300 in the temporary reserve.

No further action has been taken on the temporary reserve. These funds had been set aside to be available for potential opportunities which could arise, but to date they have not been needed by any other projects.

III. Staff Recommendations for WHALE TAIL[®] Grant Awards from the FY 2012/13 temporary reserve

The staff recommends funding one additional worthy project that had applied for competitive grant funding during this fiscal year but was originally declined due to lack of available funds.

(1) \$40,300 FOR NAVARRO-BY-THE-SEA CENTER FOR RIPARIAN & ESTUARINE RESEARCH

Project Title: Outdoor Public Interpretive Displays

Project Location: Mendocino County

Project Timeline: May 2013 – December 2014

Total Project Budget: \$64,500

Estimated number of people served by the project: 150,000+ per year

The Navarro-by-the-Sea Center is a volunteer organization working in partnership with California State Parks in Navarro River Redwoods State Park. The Park includes the area where the Navarro River enters the Pacific Ocean at Navarro Beach; it is near a junction of Highway One and is the first point where visitors from the Anderson Valley and the northern Bay Area reach the sea. Over 150,000 people visit the Park every year, and an even higher number drive past the area, yet there are currently no interpretive facilities to educate the public about this important coastal location, its history, and the natural resources there.

The Navarro-by-the-Sea Center is requesting support for eight outdoor display panels which would be ADA accessible. The displays would educate the public about the local marine, estuarine, and riparian habitats and the plants and animals there; human impacts from logging, fishing, and water diversions; the history of Navarro as a lumber town and the natural restoration process back to wetlands and riparian habitat; the newly designated Navarro River Estuary State Marine Conservation Area; the significance of Navarro Beach in a 1970 State Supreme Court decision upholding prescriptive rights to public access in coastal California; and the importance of natural resource preservation and habitat restoration. The displays would be professionally designed and constructed and installed permanently near the historical Captain Fletcher's Inn, which is in the process of being restored and turned into a visitor center.