
RE: Civil Grand Jury Follow-up

From: [REDACTED]@venturacounty.gov>
Date: Fri 2/27/2026 11:59 AM
To: [REDACTED]@venturacounty.gov>
Cc: [REDACTED]@ventura.org>; [REDACTED]@venturacounty.gov>

3 attachments (17 MB)
Combined Attachments.zip; Zones 1 and 2 Attachments.zip; Zones 3 and 4 Attachments.zip;

Good Friday morning [REDACTED],

Without sharing details about this request, I asked Watershed Protection Department staff to gather documentation and assist me with responses.

Please see below and attached. If you require anything further, please feel free to ask.

Have a wonderful weekend,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]@venturacounty.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, February 24, 2026 12:09 PM
To: [REDACTED]@venturacounty.gov>
Cc: [REDACTED]@ventura.org>; [REDACTED]@venturacounty.gov>
Subject: Civil Grand Jury Follow-up

Greetings [REDACTED],

Thanks again for your time yesterday. There are a few documents we are hoping you can provide as a follow-up to our questions.

-detailed budget for 2025/26 for Arundo maintenance/removal related items

In part, Arundo removal is identified as a line item in the budget when tied to a specific project or mitigation requirement. As far as Arundo removal associated with routine maintenance (O&M Division), it does not show up in the budget or tracked separately from all vegetation removal activity. Rather, vegetative removal in general is included in the Annual Work Plan and assigned an estimated number of staff hours for the year. Also, because Arundo removal is so time consuming (cutting and daubing), most of this work is contracted out, so there are records for these services specifically. The O&M Division has provided actual cost reports for vegetative removal by Zone (See Attachments). In order to see contractor payments for Arundo removal services, we would have to put in a separate request to Accounts Payable to get copies of all the contractor invoices/payments.

Zones 1 & 2 Arundo: There has been no "Arundo removal" in Zone 1 for 2025 and as for 2026 nothing has been done to current date. As for Zone 2 there has been Arundo removal at SCR3 for Patterson drain P6042017 in December 2025 by contractor BC Tree Services (See Attachments). We do not have an annual budget for just Arundo removal – it is done only when needed or for special project like Patterson drain.

Zones 3 & 4 Arundo: Attached are MaintStar Cost Reports for Activity P417 - Channel Activities Mech (force account labor) and for P417C - Channel Activities Mech (contractor work) for Fy 2025 - 2026. P417 Channel Activities Mech. is the activity used for mowing/cutting/mulching Arundo from Calleguas Creek, Conejo Creek and sections of Revlon Slough in Zone 3. (See Attachments)

Descriptions of Arundo vegetative removal on specific projects were provided by the D&C Division/Environmental Section for: Coyote Creek Pilot Channel Project; Matilija Giant Reed Retreatment Project, as part of MDERP; and SCR-3 Project Reach 4 Improvement Mitigation. Also attached are the Master Index of Facilities vegetation removal codes for Conejo Creek. (See Attachments)

-does VCPWD have an agreement or cooperation with the US Forest Service for installing and maintaining hydrology equipment in the Los Padres? Is lack of cooperation still a concern? (reference the [2015-16 grand jury report](#))

P&P Division/Hydrology Section continues to work through this issue with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and their reluctance to renew our permits. We've been told that, while in the process, we are to continue as normal to maintain the equipment, but we are only allowed to use the Sheriff's helicopter when accessing remote sites. The last time resolution attempts were made was around November 2021. The Hydrology Section within the Watershed Protection District continues to maintain the Flood Warning System and the coverage of critical locations to the highest standards to help protect life and property. The Flood Warning System is sound and reliable.

-routine operations and maintenance reports for county-owned property along Conejo Creek

See the attached O&M maintenance reports for Conejo Creek (FY24-25 and FY25-26 to date). These reports are separated by reach for all maintained reaches of Conejo Creek. Also, the reports are for O&M work only. MaintStar, our workorder system, does not include the contractor invoices for associated work. (See Attachment)

See the attached D&C Division/Environmental Section attachments, which include the Annual Reporting Form and the Biological Monitoring report for the vegetation removal and trimming activities conducted between October 15, 2025 and November 4, 2025 in the portions of Conejo Creek upstream of Hwy 101. Also included is the narrative we provided to a private resident's request for information during the same time period regarding vegetation removal activities in Conejo Creek.

-copies of current countywide or stream specific streambed permits or agreements with CDFW

Our Routine Operations and Maintenance Program (implemented by O&M Division) is operating under a Lake and Streambed Alteration (LSA) Agreement #1600-2004-0512-R5 with CDFW (See Attachment). This Agreement (maintained by D&C Division/Environmental Section) authorizes WPD to conduct routine maintenance and repairs to existing WPD redline channels that contain facilities. WPD does not have a blanket LSA to cover all County redline channels. If maintenance or repair work is required in a redline channel, we must determine if the channel is included in our Master Facilities Index and if the work activities required are considered routine in nature. If the redline channel is not included in the Master Facilities Index OR if the scope of work is beyond what is considered "routine maintenance", a separate/individual LSA is applied for and obtained (by D&C Division/Environmental Section).

-who at VCWPD is responsible for overseeing vegetation removal within Conejo Creek?

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] – Operations & Maintenance
VCPWA – Watershed Protection
[REDACTED] @venturacounty.gov

We would appreciate hearing back by March 3 so we can keep our report on track.

Thank you!

[REDACTED]
Civil Grand Juror
2025-2026 VC Grand Jury
 COUNTY of VENTURA
Grand Jury