



# COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 6/6/2024

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File #: 24-963

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**To:** Planning Commission

**From:** Planning and Building Department

**Agenda Section:** Consent

SUBJECT:

**Cooks Valley Special Events (2023-2027)**

**Mateel Community Center, Inc.; Conditional Use Permit and Annual Monitoring Report**

Application Number PLN-2023-18108

Cooks Valley area

Assessor's Parcel Number(s): (APN's): (Humboldt County): 033-271-007, 033-271-009, 033-271-008, 033-271-004, 033-271-005, and 033-271-015

(Mendocino County): 053-020-011, 053-020-010, 053-020-012, 053-020-013, 053-020-014, 053-020-016, 053-020-015

Review of the Annual Report for the approved Conditional Use Permit authorizing events held by the Mateel Community Center (MCC) in 2023 at the County Line Ranch (formerly Dimmick) in the Cooks Valley area. The permit allows two music festivals to be held annually. Both events feature live music, camping and various vendors, including cannabis-related concessions and consumption within discrete areas on the properties. One event is the Summer Arts and Music Festival which occurs over two days and is ordinarily held during the third weekend in June. The second event is Reggae on the River, which ordinarily occurs over three days during the first weekend in August. The Summer Arts and Music Festival was held on June 24th and 25th, 2023 and was the only event operated by the Mateel in Cooks Valley in 2023. The Reggae on the River event has not occurred since 2018 and is planned to next be held on August 2,3 and 4 of 2024. The Use Permit was approved by the Planning Commission in 2023 and requires the Mateel Community Center to submit a monitoring report to the Planning Commission for review on an annual basis. During review, the Commission is authorized to amend conditions or operational requirements if needed to better mitigate potential impacts or control public nuisance -the Commission may also adjust attendance levels under the permit based on annual performance.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Planning Commission:

1. Receive the Annual Post Event Report

**DISCUSSION:**

**Executive Summary:** Review of the Annual Report for an approved Use Permit authorizing events held by the Mateel Community Center at the County Line Ranch in the Cooks Valley area. The permit allows two music festivals to be held annually. Both events feature live music, camping and various vendors, including areas for cannabis-related concessions and consumption. The Summer Arts and Music Festival occurred on June 24th and 25th, 2023 and was the only event operated by the Mateel in Cooks Valley in 2023. It is recommended that the Planning Commission accept the report as submitted.

**Present General Plan Land Use Designation:** Timberland (T), Industrial, Resource Related (IR)

**Present Zoning:** Agriculture Exclusive (AE) & Timberland Production Zone (TPZ)

**Project Location:** The permit authorizes events occurring on several parcels spanning the Humboldt/Mendocino county line in the Cooks Valley area, on the properties known as 83950 Road 442E and 240 Cooks Valley Road. Both are located on the east side of State Highway 101 at its intersection with State Highway 271 and Cooks Valley Road. Auxiliary parking and support facilities are found on several parcels adjacent to the event site (located at 325 US Highway 101 and 101 Cook Lane), as well as several parcels to the north located near the southern boundary of Richardson Grove State Park, on properties known as 705 US Highway 101, 750 US Highway 101, and 657 Old Highway 101. The northern auxiliary parcels are host to the One Log House and Dispensary, Richardson Grove RV park, and portions of the French's Camp property located on the west side of the South Fork of the Eel River.

**Environmental Review:** An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was certified for the original project in 1992 (SCH 92-033305). Two Supplemental EIRs were certified for revisions to the project in 2005 and 2008 (SCH 92-033035). A third Supplemental EIR was certified for the project on January 3, 2013 (SCH #2012082108). Numerous Addendums have been prepared in concert with prior modifications to the permit. Links to online locations where these documents are available can be found under Attachment 2B. In 2023 an Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) was adopted during renewal and modification of the two Use Permits (SCH #2023040570). The document includes a raft of mitigation measures designed to address potential impacts related to the following checklist categories: Biological Resources, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hydrology/Water Quality, Noise, Transportation, and Wildfire. The Planning Commission's review of the Annual Report serves to implement the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program established under the most recently adopted MND.

*Permit Background*

On May 18, 2023 the Humboldt County Planning Commission authorized renewal and modification of two Use Permits allowing up to four large events to be held annually in the Cooks Valley area. They are summarized in the table below.

One Use Permit (PLN-2023-18107) is held by the Northern Nights Music Group (NNMG), who have been operating the Northern Nights Music Festival from the site since 2013. A 4-day Music Festival typically occurring during the third week in July, their Use Permit also allows for operation of a separate two-day event. The second event was last held in 2016.

The other Use Permit (PLN-2023-18108) is held by the Mateel Community Center (MCC) who are allowed two separate events. In recent years, only the Summer Arts & Music Festival event has been conducted by the Mateel from the Cooks Valley site.

#	PERMIT	*EVENT	PERMITTEE / OPERATOR	TOTAL # (MAX)			
				DAYS	CAMPING	ATTENDANCE	VEHICLES
1	PLN-2023-18107	Northern Nights	NNMG	4	9000	10,000	4500
2			NNMG	2	4000	5000	2500
3	PLN-2023-18108	Summer Arts & Music Fest.	MCC	2	4500	5000	2500
4		Reggae on the River	MCC	3	7000	8000	4000

\* *event name omitted where uncertain*  
MCC – Mateel Community Center                      NNMG – Northern Nights Music Group, LLC

The Mateel Use Permit includes a Condition of Approval requiring they annually submit a post event report detailing compliance with the terms of the permit and commitments made in their Event Operations Plan. The Commission is being asked to review and consider the information provided in the MCC Annual Post Event Monitoring Report as well as feedback from planning staff and relevant agencies to determine whether events are being conducted in compliance with the permit conditions and operational commitments made by the permittee. Under the terms of the permit, the Commission has the authority to adjust the authorized attendance levels for each year’s festival(s) during review of the report for the preceding year’s event(s). MCC are only planning to hold one event (Reggae on the River) in Cooks Valley in 2024 and are not seeking to increase attendance levels above those permitted in 2023. The Reggae on the River event is planned to occur over three days during the first weekend in August (2,3,4). On June 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> the Mateel’s annual Summer Arts & Music Festival will be occurring from the Mateel Community Center instead of at County Line Ranch.

**Monitoring & Feedback from Agencies and Public**

The 2023 Summer Arts and Music Festival took place on June 24<sup>th</sup> and June 25<sup>th</sup>. Though an

inspection was not performed during the event, staff talked with the event manager during and after the event and checked in with several state and local agencies during the week following the event. These included Caltrans, Environmental Health, Public Works, HC Sheriff, and Cal-FIRE. Based on conversations with the event operator and agencies, the festival appears to have run smoothly. Traffic controls worked effectively in part helped by lower than hoped for attendance levels. Stage, assembly, camping, and concessions areas all were located and operated consistent with the approved event map and operations plan. The County Line Ranch event site was inspected by staff a month later during monitoring of the Northern Nights event. Staff also attended the post event community meeting held on August 4, 2023 at the Richardson Grove RV Park.

The applicant reports that total event attendance was 3,382 persons over the course of the two-day event, and parking of 1,230 vehicles occurred. Approximately 24,500 gallons of water were used during the month of June (including domestic non-event-related water use). The post event report provided by the applicant is included as part of Attachment 2B. The approved operations plan is included as part of Attachment 2A.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

In April 2024 the Planning & Building Department circulated the 2023 post-event report to various agencies and solicited feedback. A list of the agencies contacted and feedback received is summarized under Attachment 3. The Department has received no complaints or information suggesting that the 2023 event failed to comply with the permit conditions or operational commitments made by the permittee.

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The Planning Commission could set attendance levels for the 2024 events either lower or higher than proposed by the applicant. This alternative should be implemented if the Commission has information showing the existing attendance levels are inappropriate and that a change is justified. Staff does not recommend further consideration of this alternative because there is no evidence the proposed attendance levels are problematic.
2. The Planning Commission could continue the item further into the future to provide the applicant time to respond to questions or comments. This alternative should be implemented if the Commission is unable to make one or more of the required findings. Planning Division staff is confident that the required findings can be made. Consequently, staff does not recommend further consideration of this alternative.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Project Area Map
2. Applicant's Evidence in Support of the Required Findings
  - A. Operations Plan (2023-27)
  - B. Post Event Wrap-up Report
3. Referral Agency Comments and Recommendations

Owner(s)

PLN-2023-18108 Mateel Community Center, Inc.			
<b>Applicant</b> Mateel Community Center President: Pleasure Strange P.O. Box 1910 Redway, CA 95560 (707)923-3368 <a href="mailto:pleasure@mateel.org">pleasure@mateel.org</a>	<b>Owner (Cooks Valley Campground)</b> Conrad & Trudy Bowman 83990 Road 442-E Piercy, CA 95587	<b>Owner (County Line Ranch)</b> Duncan Ley Outraged Orangutan LLC 895 Post Street San Francisco, CA 94109	<b>Agent</b> Alisha Goodrich P.O. Box 1910 Redway, CA 95560 (805)393-3334 <a href="mailto:rastapontop@gmail.com">rastapontop@gmail.com</a>

Please contact Steven Lazar, Senior Planner, at [slazar@co.humboldt.ca.us](mailto:slazar@co.humboldt.ca.us) or at (707)268-3741 if you have any questions about this public hearing item.