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VENTURA COUNTY  
GRAND JURY

Response to Grand Jury Report Form

Report Title: RANCHO SIMI RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT RANGERS

Report Date: 5-19-2011

Response by: GEOFF DEAN Title: SHERIFF

FINDINGS

- I (we) agree with the findings numbered: \_\_\_\_\_
- I (we) disagree wholly or partially with the findings numbered: 2 AND 4 \*  
*(Attach a statement specifying any portions of the findings that are disputed; include an explanation of the reasons therefor.)* \* NO POSITION TAKEN. (SEE NARRATIVE)

RECOMMENDATIONS

\* RECOMMENDATIONS DO NOT APPLY TO SHERIFFS OFFICE

- Recommendations numbered N/A have been implemented.  
*(Attach a summary describing the implemented actions.)*
- Recommendations numbered N/A have not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.  
*(Attach a timeframe for the implementation.)*
- Recommendations numbered N/A require further analysis.  
*(Attach an explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or study, and a timeframe for the matter to be prepared for discussion by the officer or director of the agency or department being investigated or reviewed, including the governing body of the public agency when applicable. This timeframe shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the grand jury report.)*
- Recommendations numbered N/A will not be implemented because they are not warranted or are not reasonable.  
*(Attach an explanation.)*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of pages attached 2



# VENTURA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

- **GEOFF DEAN**  
Sheriff
- **GARY PENTIS**  
Assistant Sheriff
- **JOHN CROMBACH**  
Assistant Sheriff

800 SOUTH VICTORIA AVENUE, VENTURA, CA 93009 PHONE (805) 654-2380 FAX (805) 645-1391

May 25, 2011

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The Honorable Vincent O'Neill, Jr., Presiding Judge  
Superior Court of California, Ventura County  
800 S. Victoria Avenue, L#2121  
Ventura, CA 93009

VENTURA COUNTY  
GRAND JURY

Dear Judge O'Neill:

Re: Response to the 2010-2011 Grand Jury report entitled, *Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District Rangers*

In accordance with California Penal Code §933 (c) (d), this report is a response to the findings and recommendations of the 2010-2011 Grand Jury report entitled, *Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District Rangers*. Based on clarification from Grand Jury Foreman, Mr. Robert Peskay, my responses will be limited to two (2) of the five (5) findings (FI-02 and FI-04). Insofar as the conclusions within each finding pertain to an independent district that we have little to no interaction or involvement with, my position is to remain neutral regarding the effectiveness of the park rangers as well as the fiscal propriety of whether or not the district should fund the Ranger Program.

### Findings

FI-02. All District properties fall within the jurisdiction of either the SVPD (Simi Valley Police Department) or the VCSD (Ventura County Sheriff's Office). These agencies have the duty to provide law enforcement and public safety at all District properties. Rangers patrolling 47 district parks and facilities distributed over a large area are superfluous and ineffective (FA-05, FA-17 through FA-25).

Response to FI-02: The majority of District properties are within the city limits of Simi Valley and the elimination of the Ranger Program would logically have a greater potential impact to that city, which provides for its own police services.

In terms of the District properties within the unincorporated Sheriff's jurisdiction, the patrol cars covering those beat areas containing District properties are responsible for large geographic areas. Sheriff's response times are generally higher and resources more limited. Assuming the Ranger Program is effective, even a minimal presence of rangers would be better than none. The primary

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responsibility of deputy sheriffs patrolling the county areas, including the parks, is to keep the peace and enforce criminal statutes. If there is an assumption that Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District rules would be significantly enforced by deputy sheriffs, that assumption is false. Furthermore, deputy sheriffs would generally not be available to provide security for preplanned events at District properties other than extra patrols when possible.

FI-04. The expenditure of public funds for the Ranger Program should be called into question given the presence and jurisdiction of the SVPD and the VCSD. (FA-04, FA-09 and FA-10, FA-12 through 14, FA-19 through FA-25)

Response to FI-04: Given the limitations of Sheriffs resources as explained above, the decision as to whether or not the Ranger Program is a fiscally responsible use of public funds should not be based on any assumption that the Ventura County Sheriff's Department can fill a potential void created by the elimination of the program. With that in mind, if the program is still deemed to not be a prudent use of public funds, that determination should be made by other stakeholders and public officials with direct knowledge and oversight.

#### Recommendations

R-01 through R-03: All pertain to recommended actions to be taken by the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District and do not apply to the Ventura County Sheriff's Office.

Thank you. I appreciate the opportunity to respond to this Grand Jury report.

Sincerely,



GEOFF DEAN  
Ventura County Sheriff

Cc: ✓ Robert Peskay, Grand Jury Foreman  
Brown Mail #L3751