



MENDOCINO COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICE

NEWS RELEASE

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TO: MENDOCINO COUNTY NEWS MEDIA

Ukiah, California... April 22, 2010

MENDOCINO COUNTY HIGHLIGHTS NATIONAL COUNTY GOVERNMENT MONTH

The past few weeks have seen Mendocino County and the Board of Supervisors make painful decisions about workforce layoffs and retiree health benefits. These decisions are some of the hardest any organization can make. Counties across California are feeling the sting of state budget cuts that have greatly impacted our capacity to provide services, and traditional general revenue sources the counties rely upon have fallen short. At the same time, public need and demand for county services have continued to increase as the current economic recession continues. Despite all of these negative changes, hope remains in that many County programs do continue to exist and provide services with a high degree of public value to our community. Your local governments – City's, Special Districts, and Counties – continue to provide services that we use everyday, and public access to the decision making process is far more available to our citizens than a trip to Sacramento, or Washington D.C.

Counties are on the front line of providing public services.

On April 6, 2010, The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors issued a Proclamation declaring the month of April National County Government Month. They joined hundreds of other counties nationwide in an effort to highlight the services that over 3,000 county governments provide to over 300 million Americans.

The emphasis for this year's National County Government Month is "Healthy Counties" and the following list identifies some of the lesser known, but equally important aspects in which County departments contribute to a healthy Mendocino County:

- Child Support Services manage over 7,000 active cases in Mendocino County, with approximately 150 new cases each month. A third of those new cases go through DNA testing to establish paternity. On average, there are 30 cases a week this agency oversees in the Superior Court to establish and modify Child Support orders, and there are over 100 legal process servings for court appearances monthly. Child Support Services collects and distributes over \$7 million in support payments yearly, and its services are currently free to those who need help. For more information or for assistance in establishing and enforcing court orders for child support, and many other related services, please contact (866) 901-3212.
- The Mendocino County Water Agency protects and develops drinking water supplies, and also helps protect the community from flood waters. Over 2,500 students have participated in various Water Agency storm water and water educational programs. The Water Agency secured \$8 million in grants for water resource planning, water infrastructure, and habitat enhancement projects through participation in the North Coast Integrated Regional Water Management Plan Group. The County also conducts water supply feasibility investigations, and averages 50 project reviews annually for both Planning and Building Services and Environmental Health. For more information, please contact (707) 463-4589 or visit mendocountywa.com
- The Sheriff's Office is one of the most visible operations in Mendocino County. In addition to Law Enforcement and Coroner's operations, one of the less observable functions is that of the County Jail, where 6,224 bookings took place in 2009 alone. The County is required to provide medical services to jail inmates in order to maintain the health of those in the system. Services include everything from TB screenings to the administration of various medications, mental health evaluations, and off-site specialist appointments.

- Mendocino County is responsible for over 570 acres of land, including 7 parks and 2 public access areas. Activities at the County parks include hiking, fishing, cycling, swimming, tennis, baseball, and children's playgrounds. Many of the parks also include picnic tables, drinking water, and restrooms. One of the newest additions is an off-leash dog park, located on one acre within the Low Gap Park, in Ukiah. Additions to this park in the near future include agility equipment and message center kiosks.

On March 23, 2010, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 was signed into law, starting a multi-year process that will change the landscape of healthcare in Mendocino County, and across the United States. The County urges all those interested in learning more about this change to visit www.healthreform.gov to become better informed about how these changes will affect you and your family.

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