



City and County of San Francisco Civil Grand Jury, 2012-2013

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Time is Ripe to Make a Plan for Better Utilization of Log Cabin Ranch: Juvenile crime is down, but SF is still sending some young offenders as far as 3,000 miles away.

In 2011, the S.F. Civil Grand Jury released a report detailing positive changes in the S.F. Juvenile Probation Department following the hiring of the new Chief of Juvenile Probation, William Siffermann. Among recommendations for further improvement was the expansion and upgrading of Log Cabin Ranch, the residential camp for 14-18 year old boys convicted of serious felonies. The "Ranch", with its proximity to family, is ideally situated to treat, educate and rehabilitate these youth with the goal of successful reentry into our San Francisco community. The report acknowledges the benefits of providing rehabilitation and programs to minimize recidivism in order to avoid the huge societal costs of adult crime and incarceration.

The Ranch, owned by San Francisco on 600 acres in San Mateo County, has had a checkered history since its inception in the 1950s. Despite successful efforts to adopt modern theories of rehabilitation, the Ranch has suffered from the City's lack of a clear vision for its future. The 2012-13 Civil Grand Jury issued a follow-up report, "**Log Cabin Ranch: Planning for the Future.**" It found that little has been done since the previous report, leaving the Ranch in limbo. This lack of action has prevented the very improvements that would allow for maximum utilization of the facility. The Jury found that a significant number of juvenile offenders are still sent out of state or to group homes in distant counties. The Jury recommends the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors investigate and implement ways to make the Ranch the obvious choice for commitment for San Francisco youthful offenders. This also means San Francisco must finally decide to invest in the future of the Ranch by funding a master plan. Log Cabin Ranch has the potential to bring more youths closer to their families and to be a model for juvenile justice practices.

To view and download the full report, go to www.sfsuperiorcourt.org and click on Civil Grand Jury Reports.