

CTC dinged in state audit over license plates

By Kathryn Reed

The California Department of Finance in its last audit of the California Tahoe Conservancy's license plate program questioned the amount of money being used for administrative expenses.

"Because it does not separately account for direct or indirect salaries and operating expenditure, we are unable to determine compliance with the administrative cap," the report says.

Out of four categories the Conservancy was compliant in two, not compliant in one and undetermined in one.

The undetermined is limiting administrative costs, marketing or other promotional activities related to the license plates to 25 percent of expenses.

Table 1: Salaries and Operating Expenditures Percentages by Fiscal Year

Fiscal Year	Total Expenditures	Salaries	% of Total	Operating Expenditures	% of Total
2008-09	\$993,326	\$401,253	40%	\$185,543	19%
2009-10	\$1,779,066	\$580,459	33%	\$229,364	13%
2010-11	\$1,960,148	\$637,717	33%	\$396,752	20%
2011-12	\$2,698,446	\$593,791	22%	\$317,766	12%

Source: CALSTARS reports

Total Expenditures Reported to DMV Are Not Supported by Accounting Records

In the report following the above graphic it says, "The total expenditure amounts included in the annual report to DMV are not supported by the Conservancy's accounting records. ... We recommend the Conservancy review and reconcile internal databases with accounting records to ensure accurate amounts are reported to DMV."

CTC issues a specialty plate in California and Nevada. Vehicle

owners pay an extra fee when registering a vehicle. That money is then put in the CTC's account. Much of what is collected is used for recreation uses like bike trails.

The issue CTC is not compliant with is Vehicle Code 5060(h)(1) – preparing and submitting an annual accounting report to the Finance Department by June 30. The report is to include an accounting of all revenues and expenditures associated with the special interest license plate program.

“It was just an accounting issue. The folks in Sacramento like as many different accounts as possible to track our expenses and revenues,” CTC Executive Director Patrick Wright told *Lake Tahoe News*. “We get audited very frequently on all sorts of different things.”

The purpose of this audit was to make sure money from the plates was being used appropriately.

Wright said the audit findings were not serious.

“They want to make sure all of our money is spent the right way,” Wright said. And he said it is.