

MARIN CONSERVATION LEAGUE

Parks and Open Space Committee

May 11, 2017, 4:00 – 5:30

MINUTES

ATTENDEES: Nona Dennis, Chair, Greg Zitney, Linda Novy, Robert Eichstaedt, Arlin Weinberger, Larry Minikes, Kate Powers, Roger Roberts, Peter Anderson, Jean Berensmeier, Gordon Bennett, Michael Keyes, Delos Putz, Tom Boss, Susan Stompe, Judy Teichman, Rick Fraites, Al Baumann, Mike Swezy (MMWD), Henry Symons (Office of Assembly Member Marc Levine), and Jon Campo (MCP).

Meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS and CHANGES/ADDITIONS TO AGENDA: 1) Brief report on NPS Science and Natural Resources Symposium, May 11, Presidio; 2) Road and Trail Management Plan Region 4 public meeting, May 13, Margaret Todd Senior Center, Novato, time tbd; 3) Bay Area Open Space Council Conference, Craneway Pavilion, Richmond, May 18; 4) May 20, Broom pull on East Silvestris (MCOSD); 5) Road and Trail Celebration, May 21, 9:30 – 11:30, Old Railroad Grade in Baywood Canyon; 6) State Parks Forward Commission mtg, May 22, 1:00 – 4:00, Resources Bldg, Sacramento; 7) Senior Walk, Cemetery Marsh, Rush Creek OSP, May 25 and Lake Lagunitas, June 29; 8) National Trails Day, June 6, various events; 9) MMWD Watershed Committee meeting, June 15, 1:30 – 3:00.

MINUTES of April 14, 2017, were approved.

ACTION ITEM: The committee spent some time discussing MCL's draft comment letter on Hunt Camp/Juniper Trail Improvement Project. Principal negative concerns expressed: Almost entire trail is in Legacy Zone; upper trail is steep and rough, and even with improvements will be unsafe for shared hiker-biker travel. Other views: Trail has long history of use; staff ave designed it to be primitive trail not for "fun" but to minimize disturbance to sensitive habitat; the benefit of the project lies in decommissioning other, more destructive trails; alignment was moved to avoid sensitive resources; volunteers have agreed to maintain it; etc. Various other options were discussed, such as closing upper trail, or terminating it so that lower trail is for hikers only.

M/S/C: Recommend that MCL Board send letter objecting to Hunt Camp Trail Improvement Project to County Parks staff and Board of Directors, Marin County Open Space District.

INFORMATION UPDATES:

1. Marin Parks and Open Space
 - a. RTMP. Jon Campo was present to review several RTMP activities. The Region 4 public meeting will be held on May 13. No changes-in-use are proposed, but nonessential emergency/fire roads might be modified to 5 or 6 feet for multi-use, with some redesign or realignments. Committee members are particularly concerned that Mt. Burdell trails not serve as an attractive bike access to Olompali State Park trail. A Road and Trail

Celebration is planned for May 21, 9:30 – 11:30 above Baywood Canyon to officially open the new bridge and re-route on Old Railroad Grade, Fairfax.

- b. Environmental Roundtable Jon Campo reported on the first meeting of the Environmental Roundtable on April 21, and wants to continue meetings on environmental issues. Greg Zitney requested that notes on meeting be distributed.
- c. RTMP 2017 work program. Jon summarized projects that will begin soon: “Gasline Trail” in Alto Bowl OSP will begin construction next week. The existing steep trail will remain in place until 2018. Other projects will be underway soon: Middagh Trail, Irving Fire Road, and Cobblestone Fire Road repair.
- d. Senior walks in 2017. The last two Walks for this season will be on May 25, Cemetery Marsh in Rush Creek Preserve, and on June 29 at Lake Lagunitas.

2. MMWD:

- a. Mike Swezy reported on the status of several projects: The Project Restore work on Old Railroad Grade and Gravity Car Grade to remove “eyebrows” and several social trails had a small turn-out of volunteers on May 6 but was successful. A consultant team continues to work on feasibility studies for West Peak restoration and will report on June 15 at the Watershed Committee meeting. Public walks are planned for May 13, 21, and 27 (Geology); June 17 (Rare plants) and 24 (Hydrology). The District is hoping to have preliminary alternatives to present at Sept. Watershed meeting. An indoor workshop is planned for October. Environmental review continues on Azalea Hill Trail project as staff is considering an alignment to avoid building new trail through serpentine habitat. The Draft EIR for the Wildfire Protection and Wildlife Habitat Improvement Plan is in process.
- b. The June 15 Watershed Committee meeting will also review management of invasive species and Policy #7.

3. Tamalpais Lands Collaborative

- a. Science Event. (Repeated from April Minutes) On October 26, OneTam will hold a half-day (noon to 3:30) Science Update at the Marin Art and Garden Center. A “Tam Talk” session with the Executive Committee will follow, to review 2017 accomplishments and present plans for 2018.
- b. OneTam web site has added a “What’s New” page.

4. State Parks

- a. Prompted by MCL’s draft letter to State Parks concerning policy on use of e-bikes on Marin’s state parks, the committee discussed the regulations that may apply to e-bikes as “other-power-driven mobility devices (OPDMD) for disabled. E-bikes are generally considered motorized vehicles and therefore prohibited by most open space lands, but rules differ among agencies on acceptability of e-bikes as OPDMDS. There was general

opposition to permitting e-mountain bikes on Marin public lands trails, including multi-use trails, particularly due to lack of ability to enforce their use.

- b. A meeting was scheduled in Sacramento for May 22 to report on the achievements of the 2-year Transition Team and Parks Forward Commission.

5. National Parks in Marin

- a. GGNRA/Muir Woods Projects Update. MCL submitted comments on the EA for the **Salmon Enhancement and Bridge Replacement Project**. It focused on the complexity of implementing the project to minimize temporary impacts on the environment and disturbance to visitors. The letter suggests that the EA understated significant cumulative impacts (of all planned projects) on traffic and on sediment delivery during a prolonged construction period that could last for five years or more.
 - b. Frank Valley Road Rehabilitation (FLAP project) was the subject of a public meeting on April 19 to consider possible design alternatives. The FHWA is the lead agency for design, engineering, and NEPA Environmental Assessment, and the County – the recipient of funds for the project – is the lead agency for CEQA Initial Study. Gordon Bennett (Save Our Seashore) recommended two narrowest alternatives (11’ each lane, from Muir Beach to Deer Park; and 9’ lanes to Muir Woods entrance). The objective would be to deliberately slow traffic close to the entry for purposes of pedestrian safety. MCL will submit a letter of comment on the alternatives.
6. Trail Partners: The “Slow and Say Hello” campaign will launch the summer season on June 3, National Trails Day, with a tabling schedule at popular trailheads. The brochure has been re-printed with slight change in wording and including the logos of four land management agencies and Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, who are supporting the effort.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:45

Minutes by Nona Dennis