

MARIN CONSERVATION LEAGUE
Parks and Open Space Committee
June 8, 2017, 3:00 – 5:00

MINUTES

ATTENDEES: Nona Dennis, Chair, Greg Zitney, Linda Novy, Arlin Weinberger, Larry Minikes, Kate Powers, Roger Roberts, Delos Putz, Tom Boss, Susan Stompe, Roger Harris, Eva Buxton, Al Baumann, Mike Swezy (MMWD), Cal Weeks (Office of Assembly Member Marc Levine), Sharon Farrell (One Tam), and Jon Campo and Lisa Michl (MCP).

Meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS and CHANGES/ADDITIONS TO AGENDA: 1) SF Bay Restoration Authority (Measure AA) regional meeting, June 9, 11:00 – 1:00, Supervisors' chambers; 2) MMWD Watershed Committee mtg, June 15, 1:30 – 3:00, MMWD; 3) Kevin Wright reporting on County's "Think Before You Spray" campaign, MCL Invasive Plants Subcommittee, June 21, 3:00 – 5:00; 4) MCL Water/Watershed speaker series, June 23, 4:30 – 6:00, Sarah Phillips, Urban Streams Coordinator, Twin Cities Police building, Doherty Drive; 5) MCL Picnic on the Patio, July 22, 12:00 – 3:00; 6) Senior Walk, Lake Lagunitas, June 29, 9:00 – 2:00 p.m. It was also announced that Dan Gleusenkamp, Executive Director of California Native Plant Society, will speak at Marin Chapter meeting, June 12, 7:30 – 9:00 p.m., at The Redwoods.

MINUTES of May 11, 2017, were approved.

ACTION ITEM:

A draft letter to State Parks concerning restrictions on electric mountain bikes was included in the agenda packet for advance review. After brief discussion of the letter, which had been discussed at previous meetings, it was

M/S/C: to recommend that MCL send letter to State Parks (California Department of Recreation, with copies to other land managers, requesting that electric mountain bikes be restricted on state parks and other public lands in Marin.

INFORMATION UPDATES:

1. Marin Parks and Open Space:

RTMP. Jon Campo was present with Resource Specialist Lisa Michl to review several RTMP activities. The Region 4 public meeting was held on May 13, and comments on the draft trail designations are due by July 8. No changes-in-use are proposed, but nonessential emergency/fire roads are proposed to be narrowed to 5 or 6 feet for multi-use, with some redesign or realignments. Some dog owners have complained that this would reduce the options for walking dogs off leash. Jon will lead a field trip on June 16; meet at 9:00 at MCP.

There was some discussion about changes in wildlife abundance and distribution; generally there appears to have been an overall reduction, possibly due to increase in coyotes. Anecdotal evidence can be misleading, however. Lisa Michl reported that badgers and bats have been surveyed.

Environmental Roundtable. The roundtable will meet again on June 21 at MCL office, 9:00 a.m.

RTMP 2017 work program. Jon updated projects scheduled for construction: “Gasline Trail” new alignment in Alto Bowl OSP; Middagh Trail; Irving Fire road improvements; and Alto Bowl Fire Road culvert repair. Other projects in the pipeline for this year: Hunt Camp has issued a Project Report and will undergo CEQA analysis; and Cascade Canyon Bridge and High Water Trail decommission are in CEQA and permit review.

Senior walks in 2017. The last Walk for this season will be on June 29 at Lake Lagunitas.

2. MMWD:

Mike Swezy updated the status of several projects: The district is continuing Project Restore trail decommissioning with North Bay CC as contractor and reviewing other possible projects. A consultant team continues to work on feasibility studies for West Peak restoration and will report on progress at June 15 at the Watershed Committee meeting. Public walks to West Peak are planned for June 17, 10:00 – 1:30 p.m. (Rare plants), June 24, 10 a.m.- 12:30 p.m. (Hydrology), July 15, 10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (Opportunities for Restoration), and August 19, 10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (Geology). An indoor workshop at Marin Art and Garden Center is planned for October. (More information at onetam.org) Claire Mooney, Project Manager for One Tam, will present information to date to MCL’s P&OS Committee at the July 13 meeting.

Azalea Hill Trail Study/Negative Declaration is scheduled for release in July. Wildfire Protection and Wildlife Habitat Improvement Plan IS/Neg. Dec. is still in process. Log Cabin restoration is moving forward slowly. The project drawings are being reviewed by the county Architectural Commission to determine whether building code compliance can be adjusted to allow for historic authenticity. Fund raising is continuing.

3. Tamalpais Lands Collaborative:

Sharon Farrell updated the status of One Tam programs and projects. Two educational programs are in process or under discussion: 41 high school students are participating in an intern program; and Sharon and Janet Klein (MMWD) are in discussions with County Board of Education about ways to integrate science into high school AP classes. One Tam will split one current staff position into two: one to cover Restoration and Stewardship (including bioblitzes) program, and one to manage the Wildlife Picture Index project.

Research on bats in partnership with USGS is ongoing; acoustic monitoring stations have been established in most Preserves and GGNRA, and mist netting continues, with university interns doing the field work. In 2018, bat tagging and telemetry will be added to the data gathering. The Wildlife Picture Index is gathering 3 years of data; 80 cameras have been added to the Redwood Creek Watershed. Other studies in process include: pollinators, and springs and seeps on Mt. Tam.

Redwood Creek Trail and Bridge Replacement project is undergoing CEQA review by State Parks; One Tam is helping with permitting and raising funds to replace bridges. The trail is closed due to one failed bridge.

As reported earlier, OneTam will hold a half-day Science Update with a focus on wildlife, on October 26, 12:00 – 3:30 at the Marin Art and Garden Center, followed by a “Tam Talk” session with the Executive Committee.

4. State Parks

Nona gave a brief overview of the recent (May 23) final report on the achievements of the 2-year Transition Team as directed by the Parks Forward Commission. The report documents significant initiatives in modernizing revenue collection, budgeting and other financial management tools; administrative progress in expanding and diversifying opportunities for management positions; improved relations with park partners; developing an updated comprehensive reservation system; and launching community outreach projects.

The report also sets out a process and identifies a consultant to study the feasibility of a “park support organization.” It is unclear how this organization might duplicate (or not) the support services already provided by the California State Parks Foundation. This warrants further study.

5. National Parks in Marin:

The NPS continues to make progress in implementing the County and Park Service MOU. NPS is evaluating proposals for a concessionaire to install the **Access Reservation System**, scheduled for launch in 2018. Two projects – the **Muir Wood Sustainable Access Project**, and the **Water and Wastewater Service Lines Rehabilitation Project** – have completed environmental review and are scheduled for construction in 2018.

Frank Valley Road Rehabilitation (FLAP project). MCL submitted comments on July 9 for scoping of the project environmental document(s). The comments recommended that the narrowest alternatives (11’ each lane, from Muir Beach to Deer Park; and 9’ lanes to Muir Woods entrance) be analyzed as a preferred alternative in the CEQA/NEPA document. The objectives of the project should be to eliminate any encroachment into Redwood Creek, to repair culverts so as to store and treat storm runoff before discharge, and to deliberately slow traffic close to the Monument entry for purposes of pedestrian safety.

6. Trail Partners: The “Slow and Say Hello” campaign launched the summer season on June 3, National Trails Day, with a tabling schedule at popular trailheads. The four land management agencies plus Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy are supporting the effort.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:45

Minutes by Nona Dennis