

MARIN CONSERVATION LEAGUE
Parks and Open Space Committee
November 9, 2017, 3:00 – 5:00

ATTENDEES: Nona Dennis, Chair, Greg Zitney, Larry Minikes, Susan Stompe, Robert Eichstaedt, Arlin Weinberger, Rick Fraitas, Larry Scheibel, Larry Kennings, Al Baumann, Jon Campo (MCP), and Mia Monroe, GGNRA.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS and CHANGES/ADDITIONS TO AGENDA: 1) “One Tam Day of Thanks” volunteer broom pull event, Nov. 11, Horse Hill, from 9:00 a.m.; 2) Mt. Burdell Open Space tour (by reservation), Nov. 13; 3) Muir Woods MOU Update public meeting, Nov. 28, Tam Valley Community Center; 4) MMWD Watershed Committee meeting, Dec. 21, 1:30.
AGENDA revised to open with National Parks updates

MINUTES of Oct. 12, approved

INFORMATION UPDATES:

1. National Parks:GGNRA

Mia Monroe reported on several current events and projects:

- GGNRA has a new superintendent, after many months of acting appointments. **Supt. Laura Joss’** beginning date is December 1. She is a 27-year veteran of the NPS who most recently led the agency’s West Coast office. She resides with her family in Novato.
- On the direction of the Department of the Interior, GGNRA has dropped the ongoing attempt to complete a **Dog Management Plan** and will revert to 1979 policy. The process was viewed as too long and contentious, and without a solution. Some regulatory “gray areas” remain for new trails opened in GGNRA since 1979.
- The “**FLAP**” project to rehabilitate Muir Woods (Frank Valley) Road has completed scoping and is refining alternatives based on public feedback and concerns of permitting agencies. Under separate, available funding, designs for a replacement of the concrete bridge are moving forward. A combined EA (federal) and IS (County) is in process. Construction is unlikely to begin before 2020.
- The **Salmon enhancement and bridge replacement project** inside Muir Woods is going through State Historic Preservation Office permitting process and has moved into the design phase, expected to be completed in fall of 2018.
- The “**Coho jumpstart**” program (removing salmonid juveniles from Redwood Creek for hatchery rearing followed by returning adults to the Creek) has shown 100% survival of fish returned to the Creek.
- At the end of year 2 of the 7-year **MOU between NPS and County**, a concessionaire is on board to initiate the Muir Woods parking reservation system (Ace Parking Management). NPS is reaching out to prepare the public for the management system, which will begin taking reservations on January 1 and require reservations on January 16, 2018. A limited number of same-day reservations will be offered on an as-available

basis. The public meeting on November 28 will be an opportunity to explain the system. A 24-hour call center in 8 languages, as well as the Muir Woods web page, will provide information. The concessionaire will assist visitors as “parking ambassadors” at the monument and support the sheriff in enforcement of parking restrictions along the road.

2. Point Reyes National Seashore (PRNS)

There was a brief announcement that the NPS is initiating an Amendment to the General Management Plan and EIS that will focus on 28,000 acres of rangeland that are within the pastoral zone of the park and the 10,000 acre portion of GGNRA in Olema Valley that is managed by PRNS. The GMP Amendment and EIS process is beginning with public meetings and comment on alternatives, three of which are required under terms of the settlement of the recent law suit. MCL’s Ag/Land Use Committee will be following the process closely, with the Parks and Open Space in a secondary role.

3. Tamalpais Lands Collaborative:

There was brief discussion of the One Tam Science Symposium by those who attended the event on October 26 at the Marin Art and Garden Center. Everyone agreed that it was an informative and very successful symposium. As reported earlier, the symposium was followed by a “Tam Talk” session from 4:30 – 6:00.

The committee commented on the new One Tam map of Mt. Tam study area. Some means of slowing bikes on the Diaz Ridge Trail are needed. Chicanes were suggested. Concerns were expressed about electric mountain bikes showing up on GGNRA trails, moving rapidly uphill.

4. State Parks

Arlin Weinberger reported that the public continues to receive no information on how profits from “Sound Summit” held on Sept. 9, 2017, will be donated to Mt. Tam SP, or who will oversee expenditures. This was the fourth concert to be held for the benefit of Mt. Tam State Park. The profits have been, in order, \$25,000 and \$40,000 (expenditures reported to the public); and \$60,000 and \$75,000 (expenditures not reported to the public). She has been unable to get a response as to the status of profits or permits.

5. MMWD

A brief report was given on projects on MMWD watershed: Azalea Hill Trail project is still undergoing environmental review. A follow-up botanical survey on a segment that was not previously surveyed will be conducted in spring of 2018. Other work on the Initial Study is continuing. A report on feasibility studies and conceptual alternatives for the West Peak restoration project will be presented to the District board early in 2018. The EIR for the vegetation management plan (Biodiversity, Fire and Fuels Integrated Plan) will not be completed until late 2018.

6. Marin Parks and Open Space

Jon Campo reviewed, with slides, the status of trail projects completed in the recent construction season: “Gasline Trail” realignment and Middagh Trail (complete), both in the Alto Bowl OSP – decommissioning of the old Gasline Trail will follow; the upper Hunt Camp Trail in Giacomini OSP is completed; the lower trail project will be deferred for about 2 years. The Irving Fire Road work is complete.

He announced that a new native plant nursery is being established on the east side of the Civic Center.

Staff is continuing to review environmental conditions in Region 5 (San Pedro OSP, Terra Linda-Sleepy Hollow Divide OSP), mapping Legacy Zones (serpentine areas) and grasslands. The San Pedro OSP has no sensitive species, although Northern spotted owl has nested in previous years. Santa Venetia OSP has golden eagles present (?). No decisions have been made on specific alignments or trail designations.

Jon reviewed projects scheduled for 2018 construction season in Region 3 that have been undergoing botanical and wildlife surveys. Trails in Lucas Valley are intended to avoid fragmenting the preserve. Ponti Ridge, where a road-to-trail conversion is anticipated, has been surveyed for sensitive plant species and communities, such as native fescue grassland and oak community. The attempt in realigning the trail will be to minimize intrusion into areas of sensitivity, especially where a number of roads/trails converge.

Surveys are continuing on Mt. Burdell, most of which has now been surveyed for sensitive plant communities and wildlife (e.g., badger and red-legged frog are present; bats are diverse [15 species] and abundant on Mt. Burdell). Josque Grove appears to function as a (or is a former) vernal pool; Hidden Lake is a vernal pool. The Environmental Roundtable group will have an opportunity to tour sensitive areas on Mt. Burdell on November 13.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00.

Minutes by Nona Dennis