

MARIN CONSERVATOIN LEAGUE

Parks and Open Space Committee

July 12, 2018, 3 – 5:00

Minutes

ATTENDEES: Greg Zitney (Acting Chair), Larry Minikes, Linda Novy, Diane Kay, Eva Buxton, Robert Eichstaedt, Delos Putz, Mia Monroe (GGNRA), Jon Campo (MCP), Tara McIntire (MCP), Samantha Haimovitch (MCP), Kevin Wright (MCP), Larry Scheibel, Roger Harris, Nancy Benjamin, Jill Templeton, Sharon Farrell (One Tam), Amory Willis, Susan Stompe, Paul Minault, Kate Powers.

ANNOUNCEMENTS and CHANGES/ADDITIONS TO AGENDA: 1) MCL Picnic on the Patio, July 14, MCL offices, 3:00 – 6:00, BBQ/Wine Tasting; 2) Marin County P&OS Commission, July 19, 2:00, field-test electric bikes on Multiuse Path, Mill Valley Middle School; 3) RTMP Public Workshop on Region 5 Preserves, Aug. 25, 1:00 – 3:00, Embassy Suites; 4) Coastal Clean-up Day, Sept. 21.

Approval of Minutes of June 14, 2018 (did not do this).

1. National Parks. (Update by Mia Monroe).

- a. Muir Woods is 6 months into its parking reservation system. Attendance has decreased from 5,000 visitors a day, to 1,000 to 4,000 visitors. Goal of the reservation system is to reduce congestion and road shoulder parking. Three steps to the reservation system: a) cars (reserve ahead), b) shuttle (public transit) more than 30% of visitors are using this. It runs every weekend and holidays, and daily in the summer. c) Commercial tours must have prior reservations. Current parking lot favors smaller buses, and renovation of parking will not expand large commercial bus space. A special space is reserved for education and outreach groups. Biggest challenge ahead is construction season from August to November. The Redwood Renewal 5-year program of improvement includes moving waste water system out of sensitive areas, replacing bridges, relocating parking, salmon enhancement, improving trails, and constructing Dipsea Bridge. Questions asked included: will construction affect visitor use? Mia responded that they are framing it as “come see your park dollars make MW better and come back in 5 years to see the renewed redwood forest! Mia is hoping to have ambassadors explain why work is necessary. Some trails will continue to be accessible, but forest ambience will be a bit disturbed.
- b. The Redwood Creek and Dias Trail Extension Project is part of Redwood Renewal program. Soon the EA will be finalized/released, funding efforts are underway. Hoping for interim measures to reopen current trail (damaged by winter 2017 storms) and major trail renovations/upgrades in future years.
- c. GGNRA Headlands. This park is experiencing increased visitation and is at an “overload” level. Just before 7-4 – 7-15-18 some changes were implemented, i.e., a pilot program to change main roads to one way and create protected roads for bikes. Staff is assigned to monitor quantities and wait periods. Goal is to better manage traffic flows. Mia suggested checking the web site for future modifications. MCL and other groups will be involved. Amory noted that the pilot program was helpful.

2. Marin Parks and Open Space. (Update by Jon Campo)

- a. Road and Trails Management Plan.
  - i. At Mt. Burdell, the red legged frog pond modification work has begun. The goal is to provide better sites for frogs so that they become more resilient. The project includes physical changes to ensure enough water from springs and surface runoff for frogs to complete their

reproductive cycle, while not providing perennial water. MCP's wildlife ecologist, Trish Tratarian, Pruneske Chatham, Inc., is advising. No road or trail will lead to the pond, as MCP does not want to draw attention to it.

- ii. Next week two failed culverts will be replaced at Bob Middagh Trail to reduce sediment discharge into the watershed.
  - iii. The Environmental Roundtable will review refined design alternatives for Ponti Ridge (Pacheco Valle OSP), and is studying Rush Creek OSP, east side, to find better approaches to connect the fire road and Bahia Trail.
  - iv. Region 5 meeting on August 25, Embassy Suites, 1:00 – 3:00 pm. Region 5 includes: Terra Linda/Sleepy Hollow, San Pedro Mountain, Santa Margarita Island, Santa Venetia Marsh, and Bald Hill OSPs.
3. Acquisition of San Geronimo Golf Course. Greg Zitney summarized Marin Superior Court's decision. County's acquisition of the golf course is a "project" under CEQA, and is not exempt under the Class 25 categorical exemption. Therefore acquisition would constitute approval of a project before CEQA review is completed. Tara McIntire (MCP) advised that County Counsel is exploring an appeal of the Superior Court's decision. The acquisition and planning process has been halted by the Court's injunction for the time being.

Tara also advised that the golf course operator agreement is still proceeding, and next week it will be presented to the Board of Supervisors. Contractor is Touchstone Golf, llc, and public access will be allowed at certain times (Sundays 3 pm – sunset, front nine holes, and every 3rd Friday, the back nine holes). During those times, the public can fish in the ponds, ride a bike or walk. Restaurant will be open soon.

4. Environmental Justice and MCL Mission re: Parks and Open Space.
- a. Kevin Wright, Governmental and External Affairs Coordinator, and Samantha Haimovitch, Superintendent, Marin County Parks, discussed Marin parks and public lands opportunities as they relate to the needs of underserved communities/residents: how the County is addressing community needs, and how MCL (Parks & Open Space Committee) might better serve these needs within the bounds of its mission and resources. (This is part of an ongoing MCL discussion of connections between environmental justice and conservation agendas in Marin County.) The power point will be posted on the MCL web site. Several handouts were provided: Marin Park Pass – residents can check out a park pass at their local library; an article from Scientific American: How Diversity Makes Us Smarter, and Viva Marin, Latino Health in Marin, a Data, Policy and Action Guide, published by Marin Latino Health Policy Partnership.
5. MMWD updates (Via e-mail from Mike Swezy)
- b. General Manager Recruitment is underway.
  - c. Azalea Hill Negative Declaration to be released in August, the exact date TBD.
  - d. A new Natural Resource Program Manager, Shaun Horne, formerly a natural resource specialist with Napa County Flood Control District, has been hired. Mike will bring Shaun and Aaron Fulton, MMWD's new environmental engineer, to the next MCL POS meeting.
  - e. Slow and Say Hello "outpost" scheduled for 7-21 at Lake Lagunitas.
6. Tamalpais Lands Collaborative (One Tam) (Update from Sharon Farrell, Parks Conservancy).
- a. One Tam – Strategy for the Next Five Years (2019-2023) The One Tam partners have recently evaluated their progress to meeting their original 5 years of goals as a part of developing their focus, priorities and goals for the next 5 years. Sharon & team would like to bring the draft goals & preliminary ideas for the revised Strategy to the next MCL meeting to review and discuss.

- b. Science Symposium, October 5, 9:00 – 5:00. Focus is on Redwood and Oak Woodland forests – “resources on the mountain.” Similar studies are occurring statewide. A link to the symposium, when it is available, will be sent out in MCL’s e-bulletin.
7. State Parks. (email from Bree Hardcastle)
- a. Bills Trail implementation activities for this year will start in mid-August. Completion of Bill's Trail is high priority this year, and staff is working diligently to complete the work in 2019. However, if work is delayed by other factors (e.g. last year's rain damage and wildfires) then completion will be 2020. Once the project is complete the trail is required to be closed for an additional year.
  - b. Easy Grade Trail. State Parks has completed one season of USFWS protocol level Northern Spotted Owl surveys and a full season of rare plant surveys in the project area. At this time there is no funding for further planning or implementation of the project.
  - c. Redwood Creek Trail. State Parks is preparing to file the Final Negative Declaration and the Notice of Determination. District facilities staff has been working with FEMA to get funding for the bridge that failed (Bridge 1) and are still actively pursuing funding for the repair project.
  - d. State Parks Forward and Parks California. (Update from Sharon Farrell) Sharon provided some history on the evolution of the new non-profit – Parks California. She shared a number of resources including the Business Plan and a Report from the Parks Forward Commission. This newly formed organization has recently established its founding Board of Directors, Sharon was selected as a Board member. It is currently seeking an executive director, and is hoping to hire at end of September-October. Sharon suggested several individuals who could potentially speak at the upcoming MCL breakfast about State Parks – Christina Jaromay (Chief of Partnerships) and Rachel Norton (Exec. Dir. of California State Parks Foundation (CSPF)).
  - e. Paul Minault noted that part of Glen Creek (in China Camp) has heavy infestation of invasive weeds and should be addressed.

**Adjourned:** 5:05 pm

Minutes by Linda Novy

**Next meeting:** August 9, 2018