

MARIN CONSERVATION LEAGUE

**Parks and Open Space Committee Meeting
May 9, 2012**

FINAL MINUTES

ATTENDEES: Nona Dennis, Chair; Joyce Britt, Greg Zitney, Larry Minikes, Ernie Stanton, Ron Miska, Marin County Parks. (Small group due to change from regular Thursday time)

ANNOUNCEMENTS: 1) Bay Area Open Space Council, Presidio, May 10; 2) Bike to Work, May 10; 3) Official Opening of 680 Trail, May 19, 9:30, location at east end of trail; TCC Centennial Event has been postponed to June 2013 to allow time to plan a “big-name” event in Mountain Theater.

MINUTES for April 12, 2012 – Approved

ACTION ITEMS: None

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- 1) State Parks: AB 1589 The Committee briefly reviewed the key provisions of this bill which would enact the California State Park Stewardship Act of 2012, requiring the Department of Parks and Recreation to limit to 25 the number of state park units subject to full park closure during the 2012 to 2016 calendar years; revise the factors used by the department as a basis for determining which units to close; develop an action plan to increase revenues and collection of user fees; create an enterprise fund in the State Treasury; require transfer of \$25 million dollars from unexpended balance of bond funds under the Safe Drinking Water . . . Bond Act of 2006; and other provisions. The focus of AB1589 is on long-term sustainability of the state park system rather than on immediate “rescue” of specific parks slated for closure.
- 2) State Parks: “Sustainable Parks Proposal” to keep at least 50 park units open was mentioned briefly, authored by Rep. Noreen Evans (D Santa Rosa) and Joe Simitian (D Palo Alto) and sponsored by the California State Parks Foundation, and the Committee was urged to read a full copy of the proposal at <http://sd02.senate.ca.gov/>.
- 3) The Walk into (Conservation) History at China Camp SP, May 5, was well-attended by about 35 people. Several Friends of China Camp assisted by walking interference to prevent encounters with Mt. bikes, and relating some of the history of area before it became a Park. Louise Kanter Lipsey related the story of efforts by Bob Young (MCL), Louise, and others to save Pedro Ridge from massive development in the 1970s and to get lands into the State Park system. Kathy Cuneo identified vegetation and wildflowers along the way and discussed the value of salt marshes. Ernest Chung concluded the walk with a brief pitch to help Save China Camp.
- 4) China Camp SP Update: Ernie Stanton reported that the FOCC has raised \$180,000 toward their \$250,000 goal. They continue to meet with Danita (Marin Division Superintendent) to refine their proposal to partner with State Parks, pursuant to AB 42, in operating China Camp. Several Events are being staged: May 19, Asian-American Heritage Day, 10 – 4, at the Village; June 20, S.F. Maritime Museum event,

6 – 9, \$50, including oysters; July 7 and 17, Introduction to China Camp at College of Marin event, Community Education. FOCC held a very successful fund-raising dinner, in cooperation with Marin Chinese Cultural Association, on April 26 at Yet Wah Restaurant in San Rafael.

- 5) Open Space and Agricultural Ballot Measure. Ron Miska outlined the purpose of the upcoming BOS agenda item (May 15) on the proposed ballot measure. The Board will hear from the Parks Department on the unmet needs of the department and wants to hear support from community organizations in requesting the BOS to explore the possibility of a 1/8 or 1/4 cent sales tax measure to offset upcoming budget cuts in the department. The rough allocation of revenues would be as previously outlined: 20% to the MALT agricultural easement program, which they would match on a 1:1 basis; 10% to community parks; and 70% to Parks Department to be used for stewardship, maintenance, parks, and acquisition. Community organizations should request the BOS to authorize a poll, direct staff to develop an expenditure plan in consultation with the Parks Commission; and return to Board at an early date with poll results and a draft expenditure plan. Ron responded to questions, and reiterated that he wants to avoid earmarking funds at this time; the department would be guided by the 2008 Strategic Plan; and annual allocations would be determined by staff working with an advisory committee to identify needs, opportunities, such as for acquisition or bonding, set-asides ,etc.
- 6) Commemorating Anniversaries of Parks and Open Space in Marin in 2012. Nona reminded the committee that anniversaries for a number of public lands and associated non-profits are being celebrated in 2012. MMWD celebrated their centennial on April 25 and May 5; Tamalpais Conservation Club will celebrate next year; Tomales Bay State Park, in November; Point Reyes National Seashore has ongoing events; GGNRA and Marin County Parks. Watch web sites for further information on events.
- 7) San Rafael Airport Soccer Complex Update. The San Rafael Planning Commission will consider the merits of the project on May 29, 7:00 p.m. MCL has opposed this project for more than 6 years, as too large and intense for the sensitivity of the site.

Next meeting: Thursday, June 14, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30
Minutes by Nona Dennis