

MARIN CONSERVATION LEAGUE
Parks and Open Space Committee Meeting
June 10, 2010
Final Meeting Minutes
Accepted and Approved July 8, 2010

ATTENDEES: Derek Cavasian, Tom Boss, Betsy Bikle, Nona Dennis, Robert Eichstaedt, Delos Putz, Roger Roberts, Alison Seaman, Jean Starkweather, Susan Stompe

ANNOUNCEMENTS: 1) A copy of the Proposed Marin County Open Space District (MCOSED) Budget for 2010-2011 that was presented to the Board of Supervisors on June 8th was circulated. 2) Susan Stompe reported on the Bay Area Open Space Conference at the Presidio on May 20th at which Watershed Management, the Positive Health Aspects of Open Space Use, the Need to Reach People of Color, and the Loss of Habitats were central topics. 3) The Marin Baylands Campaign to acquire the Mira Monte Marsh site on the Petaluma River. 4) A copy of MCL's May 18th letter to the Board of Directors of the Open Space District regarding the development of New Policies to address User Conflict on Open Space District Trails and the Role of Enforcement was also circulated and discussed.

APPROVAL OF THE POSC MEETING MINUTES for May 13, 2010: The Draft POSC Meeting Minutes of May 13, 2010 were accepted and approved as presented.

ACTION ITEMS: None.

DISCUSSION AND INFORMATION ITEMS:

1) Derek Cavasian brought the POSC up to date on the status of the Smith Ranch Pond Restoration Project in San Rafael. He has arranged a meeting at the site on June 16th which will include Senior Planner Paul Jensen from the City of San Rafael, Jeff Alvarez who is a Wildlife Biologist, and Bruce Linscott from Linscott Engineering Contractors to explore further options for restoration of the pond. He believes that the best and least cost approach is to phase the project in stages, perhaps over 1-3 years. The first task is to remove the invasive Ludwigia that covers over 90% of the pond. The second task is to drain the pond so that equipment can be brought in to excavate the accumulated sediment build-up in the pond to a depth of 5 feet or greater in order to forestall the re-establishment of the Ludwigia. Disposal of the excavated sediment is a challenge; there is too much of it to place on the site as a berm and most of it will have to be trucked offsite, hopefully to a nearby destination such as the Las Gallinas Sanitary District spray fields. The trucking away of the excavated material will be an expensive proposition.

2) The second topic of discussion was the proposed "680 Trail". Roger and Dru Parker from MCL attended the MCOSD Hike on the current (4th) revised alignment on Saturday, June 5th. This alignment eliminates the several switchbacks on the Terra Linda Open Space Preserve side of the trail, and reduces the number of switchbacks required on the Loma Alta Open Space Preserve end. The revised alignment still crosses the toe of existing known landslide and land slumps and will include bridges and armored crossings of the ephemeral streams of the bowl above the San Domenico School. Several stretches of the trail will require retaining walls that will be approximately two (2) feet in height. The several ephemeral streams all feed into Sleepy Hollow Creek, a headwater tributary of Corte Madera Creek. In this connection, MCOSD staff acknowledged that a construction permit will be required from the Regional Water Quality Control Board. MCOSD staff, during the hike along the proposed alignment , also clarified that their alignment objective to maintain an average 7% grade for the trail is driven by design criteria to minimize potential erosion and to reduce the need for extra maintenance, rather than to achieve suitability of the trail for multi-use. It is expected that the Initial Study and Negative Declaration for the "680 Trail" will be released for public review and comment later in June.

3) No report on the status of the Santa Venetia School site was made. Reportedly, the San Rafael School District is now considering re-opening the School in response to increased enrollment.

4) The Committee was reminded that we can expect that the Vegetation Management Plans for the MCOSD and MMWD to be finalized this summer, which will be followed by Program EIRs for the respective agencies. Fire fuel(s) management, access for fire protection and suppression, and Invasive Plant Species Management will be their focus. MCL continues to be concerned that Vegetation Management Plans also need to be executed with due regard for habitat preservation and protection. The MCOSD has indicated that it has mapped their lands into four (4) distinct land management zones that will call for different treatment depending upon their inherent characteristics, resource value, and location.

5) The situation of the Open Space Access Acquisition Opportunity on Upper Cascade Drive in Mill Valley remains much the same. Reportedly, the Property owner is now only trying to sell the one westernmost lot rather than all three parcels together. Roger will check further with John Leonard in Mill Valley to find out what is happening with this property.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 PM.