

MARIN CONSERVATION LEAGUE

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

FINAL MINUTES

ATTENDEES: Nona Dennis, Chair; Greg Zitney, Ernie Stanton, Susan Stompe, Delos Putz, Robert Eichstadt, Larry Minikes, Mike Swezy, Tom Boss, Paula Lucchesi, John Natt, Allen Jameison (guest)

ANNOUNCEMENTS: 1) Heritage Day at China Camp State Park, August 11; 2) Parks Commission meeting, Sept 20; 3) TCC fund-raising event, October 6, details to come; 4) MCL 12th Walk into (Conservation) History, Mt. Tamalpais, September 22, in cooperation with Mt. Tam Interpretive Association. CHANGES TO AGENDA: Add MMWD discussion items and TCC announcements of events at Mt. Tam State Park.

MINUTES for June 14, 2012 – Approved

ACTION ITEMS: None

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- 1) State Parks Department: Recently discovered funds in the Department amount to about \$54 million, \$34 million of which are in an Off-Road Vehicle Fund, leaving \$20 million available to assist State Parks remain open. Gov. Brown has reassured the public that these latter funds will go to the parks to match donations that have been given and to be used for maintenance and keeping the parks open.
- 2) China Camp State Park: Ernie Stanton reported that the FOCC began operating the Park July 1 under an early agreement, with a few remaining issues to be resolved by General Services. All fees collected will remain with the Park as of July 1. A Ranger will be present 5 days a week, and on call 2 days. A full-time maintenance staff person will be assisted by maintenance aides. Volunteers are being trained by the Marin District volunteer coordinator according to State Parks guidelines. The State pays for liabilities of volunteers. FOCC is creating new identification badges. Pay stations are being purchased from “Ventek” to be placed next to ranger collection pay kiosks. Annual passes will also be available. In response to a question, Ernie estimated that under a “worst case” revenue projection, the Park could continue operating under FOCC management for 10 months.
- 3) Olompali State Historical Park: The Olompali People have clearance from the State to keep the Park open on weekends. Beyond basic water, electricity, and septic systems, no services are being provided.
- 4) Mt. Tamalpais State Park: Larry Minikes announced that TCC will hold a major centennial event at the Mountain Theater – “Mt. Tam Jam” – on June 22, 2013, 11:00 – 6:30. This will follow the Mt. Play performance season. Michael Nash will produce the event. In the meantime, TCC is beginning to raise the estimated \$60,000 up

front funds needed for the production. TCC is holding a fundraiser on October 6, 2012 – details to be developed. It will center on the Mountain Theater. The ultimate goal of all fundraising is to support one new ranger position (\$55,000) for the Park, a maintenance position (\$45,000), and money for special equipment (\$10,000).

- 5) MMWD Activities: Watershed Manager Mike Swezy reported on the status of district activities:
- a. The **Draft Vegetation Management Plan** has been released for public review and an EIR will be prepared. The schedule calls for a general information meeting on the Plan, September 11, and EIR Scoping from mid-September to Mid-October with a Scoping meeting to be scheduled in mid-October. A consultant contract will be approved for preparation of the Draft EIR, which will be completed sometime in spring 2013. In response to a question, Mike said that the MMWD Plan is being coordinated with that of Marin County Parks.
 - b. An ADA accessible cabin is being added to the **West Point Inn** complex, made possible by a donation from Ernest Emig fund.
 - c. **Marin Stables**, built in 1927 near Deer Park, has a plan for raising and renovating the stables, in part to resolve on-going drainage problems. The County is lead agency for environmental and design review.
 - d. The MMWD Board received a request from Chris Lang to recreate and film the **“Repack Race.”** The staff recommendation was to deny the request. A comment was made that illegal Mt. bike races tracked on line are occurring with some frequency on Mt. Tam trails. According to one comment, the Repack Race does have some historic significance.
 - e. The **Friends of the Watershed** has been renamed the **Tamalpais Watershed Trust**. Volunteers have been selected as the first “board” of the Trust, and a consultant has been hired to develop branding. The group anticipates being incorporated in one to two months, after which they will return to the MMWD Board to present their progress. One of the Trust’s first actions will be to initiate fund-raising in the Fall, with the general twin goals of fostering biodiversity (of the watershed) and historic features. Funds are being sought from foundations, one of which is ready to provide funds for three years. In response to a question: the Business Plan (for the Trust) was paid for with \$180,000 from the Mt. Tam Watershed Fund.
- 6) Parks, Open Space and Agricultural Preservation – Ballot Measure A. The Board of Supervisors authorized a nine-year ¼ cent sales tax measure for the November ballot. The allocation of revenues will be as follows: 20% to agricultural conservation easements program; 15% to local community and district parks; and 65% to County Parks Department to be used for stewardship, maintenance, parks, and acquisition. A small steering committee has set the campaign in motion, and a Campaign Committee will meet August 15 at MCL to take up the tasks that need to be accomplished for the campaign. To avoid any perception of Marin County staff conflict, Bob Berner is the acting chair.
- 7) San Rafael Airport Soccer Complex Update. The San Rafael Planning Commission recommended approval of the project on a 4 – 1 vote on June 6. Action by the City Council has been delayed in order to resolve a charge of conflict of interest

concerning the Mayor's leasing of space at the Airport. MCL, in cooperation with Marin Audubon Society and Las Gallinas Defense Council, retained an environmental attorney to prepare and send a letter to the Council challenging the adequacy of the EIR and the merits of the project.

Next meeting: Thursday, September 13 , 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00
Minutes by Nona Dennis