

MARIN CONSERVATION LEAGUE
Parks and Open Space Committee
March 8, 2018, 3:00 – 5:00

DRAFT MINUTES

ATTENDEES: Nona Dennis, Chair, Greg Zitney, Larry Minikes, Linda Novy, Roger Roberts, Tom Boss, Robert Eichstaedt, Arlin Weinberger, Larry Scheibel, Delos Putz, Jack Krystal, Bob Miller, Rick Holland, Amory Willis, Eva Buxton, Al Baumann, Sharon Farrell, GGNP Conservancy, Jon Campo and Mischon Martin (MCP), Janet Klein (MMWD), Mia Monroe (GGNRA).

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS: 1) Public meeting on Wildfire, March 6, 6:00 – 8:00, Board of Supervisors chambers; 2) MCL Hazard Reduction (Broom Pull), Cascade Canyon OSP, March 10; 3) MCL Walk into Conservation History – Hamilton Wetland Restoration, March 24, 9:30 – 12:30; 4) North Bay Watershed Association, Annual conference, April 6, 8:30 – 4:30, Sheraton, Sonoma County, Petaluma; 5) MCL Annual Dinner, April 6, 5:30 – 9:00 p.m., Key Room, Homeward Bound, Novato. Added: Tails & Tires Workshop, March 18, location?

MINUTES of February 8, 2017 approved

INFORMATION UPDATES:

- 1. Fire prevention/response** – Nona pointed out that a number of public meetings have been held in Marin in the aftermath of the North Bay and other wildfires in California. The most recent meeting was on March 6 at the Board of Supervisors – hosted by Board fire subcommittee, Dennis Rodoni and Judy Arnold. Agencies and public land managers across the county are coordinating their efforts to identify fire-prone areas (Wildland urban interface, or WUI), where some 69,000 residences are located. FireSafe Marin is coordinating the FireWise program. Thirteen communities or neighborhoods in Marin are recognized as FireWise. Since about ½ of the county is publicly owned and the other ½ is privately owned, it is a shared responsibility to create defensible space around structures and reduce fuel loads, especially where private and public lands abut. MCL is concerned that defensible space be created that also acknowledges the ecological values of vegetation and biodiversity. Both the Parks Open Space and Land Use Committees will track meetings and activities to reduce fire hazard, prevent destructive wildfire, create access for emergency responders, while recognizing that fire also plays a regenerative role in natural lands.
- 2. Trail Partners** –Tom Boss (MCBC) and Rick Holland (MHC) and Nona (MCL) reported that the Trail Partners will make a presentation at the annual State Parks Trails & Greenways conference, this year in Rohnert Park. The presentation will document how the TPs came together, how they planned the Slow and Say Hello Campaign in partnership with land management agencies, the activities that the partnership has undertaken to promote the campaign, and how we are trying to measure effectiveness of the campaign. MCL's primary role in the partnership is to represent the environment as well as the hiking community and the obligation for all recreational visitors to care for the environment.

3. **Community Marin – Draft Parks and Recreation section.** Several people have submitted edits for the draft section, which was distributed with the agenda; others would like to do so, and will submit edits to Nona, who will incorporate them into the draft for further review by the MCL Board, before going back to the CM working group. In response to questions, Nona explained the origins of Community Marin in 1991, and to show how this section fits into the document, she passed around copies of the 2013 version that is being updated. She explained that over the years contributing organizations like MCL, Marin Audubon, Sierra Club, etc. have used the document as an environmental policy framework on which to base positions and recommendations when testifying on issues before Board of Supervisors and other government entities.

4. **MMWD**

Linda Novy reported on the Watershed Committee meeting earlier that afternoon. She and others expressed concern during open time that electric bikes are appearing on the watershed, with no apparent enforcement (they are prohibited as “motor vehicles”). She also reported the announcement that One Tam has received three recent awards: State Parks deWitt award, National Public Lands Alliance award, and will receive the MCL Green Award. Janet Klein, Natural Resources Program Manager at MMWD, reported in Mike Swezy’s absence on the status of the Resilient Forest research project. Phase 2 was delayed by the North Bay wildfires, but will start up again this summer. The research focuses on carbon sequestration, watershed runoff and water production, healthy forests, and fuel hazard reduction. She announced that she is retiring from MMWD, but will continue working with One Tam, directing community science stewardship and biological monitoring programs, as an employee of Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy.

Janet said that the Draft EIR for the district’s vegetation management plan (BFFIP) has required additional detail to be added to the plan, and a legal opinion to avoid possible recirculation. It will be released late this year.

5. **One Tam.** Sharon Farrell reported that the third science symposium on Mt. Tam will be held on October 10. The all-day event will be centered on Forest Systems, and will focus on tanoak (the species that is highly susceptible to sudden oak death). She reported that bat studies are continuing; radio telemetry will be added to current mist netting, in collaboration with a USGS bat ecologist. Conceptual alternatives, and a preferred alternative, for the West Peak Restoration Project will be presented to the MMWD District Operations Committee on April 20. One Tam is working with State Parks to train various park district personnel in how to incorporate resource stewardship and other core values into organizational partnerships. More bioblitzes will be announced later this year. One Tam is also adding trail maintenance volunteers to their volunteer programs.

6. **Marin County Parks, Open Space District**

RTMP Draft 2018-2019 Work Plan. Jon Campo reviewed the overall objectives of the RTMP projects: 1) Reduce overall impact of trail network on the OSP environment; 2) Enhance visitor experience; and 3) Improve sustainability of the trail system.

He presented a graphic review of proposed projects in the 2018-19 RTMP Work Plan. Projects include: 1) Middle Fire Road (Mt. Burdell OSP) -- 2 miles, correct severe erosion, install 40 rolling dips for drainage and one creek crossing (est. construction, spring, summer 2018); 2) Eagle Rim Trail improvement (Mt. Burdell OSP) permits, CEQA, est. construction, summer 2018; 3) Conifer Fire Road (Giacomini OSP). 3,000 feet to be graded and resurfaced to correct erosion for sustainability; 4) Old White Hill road (Loma Alta OSP) Repair erosion, including five creek crossings -- est. construction summer 2018; 5) Toyon Fire Road (Cascade Canyon OSP) one mile, repair; 6) Reroute of "Blue Oak Trail" (Rush Creek OSP - Bahia area) plant surveys and studies in process to overcome steepness and avoid sensitive resources, timing tbd; 7) Bob Middagh Trail (Alto Bowl OSP) – culvert installation, other minor drainage, est. summer 2018; 8) Ponti Road Conversion/realignment (Ignacio OSP) – studies underway, schedule tbd.

Several people expressed concern over proposed Eagle Rim Trail improvements: Improvements don't seem necessary; the trail will attract more visitors to the already heavily used Mt. Burdell – wildlife that used to thrive there have disappeared. Dogs off leash are a major problem, along with more bicycles. Jon pointed out that many miles of social trails will be decommissioned, thus reducing fragmentation habitats. Jon also described "eco-counters" that have been installed on several trails to measure user frequency, change in use over time, especially in preserves inhabited by Northern spotted owl.

Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Plan. Mishon Martin was present to answer questions. Nona said that the MCL Invasive Plant subcommittee has studied the Draft 2017 Report/2018-19 Work Plan and will meet with staff next week to go over a number of issues, prior to review by Parks & Open Space Commission.

7. **National Parks:**

Mia Monroe, GGNRA community liaison, gave a brief update on the recently activated reservation system for Muir Woods and the status of other projects that are in various phases of planning and implementation. Their timeline has been published, extending over the next four years, but she warned that many kinds of slippages can occur. Mia reminded the group that on April 21, the first (1962) Dipsea Race that allowed women to run will be celebrated. April 22 will celebrate Earth Day, with a number of volunteer projects to clean up Stinson Beach and other nearby coastal sites. She reminded that GGNRA and other national park units face great difficulties: no budget, another possible shutdown, hiring freeze, including seasonal workers, and other major uncertainties.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00.

Minutes by Nona Dennis

The next meeting is April 12, 2018