

MARIN CONSERVATION LEAGUE
Parks and Open Space Committee
March 14, 2019

MINUTES

ATTENDEES: Nona Dennis, Chair, Greg Zitney, Larry Minikes, Arlin Weinberger, Larry Kennings, Eva Buxton, Priscilla Bull, Amory Willis, Diane Kay, Jack Krystal, Terri Thomas, Jerry Meral, Tom Boss (MCBC), Mia Monroe (NPS), Jerry Meral, Shaun Horne, Aaron Fulton, and Eric Ettlinger (MMWD), Monica Stafford (One Tam), and Max Korten, Ari Golan, and Jon Campo (MCP).

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS: 1) MCL Annual Dinner, April 5, 2019, Peacock Gap Golf Club, speaker Michael Wall, National Resources Defense Council; 2) Marin Parks & Open Space Commission Meeting, March 21, 2:00 p.m.; 3) MMWD Watershed Committee, March 21, 1:30 p.m.; 4) Presentation One Tam Wildlife Picture Index, April 12th, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.; 4) One Tam talk on Seeps and Streams at MAGC, March 18th; 5) China Camp Earth Day, April 13, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.; 6) Bald Hill joint volunteer day MMWD and MCP April 20th; 7) MCP McInnis Marsh Restoration Update, April 20th, 1:00 p.m. at McInnis Clubhouse; 8) MCP Trail Partners Volunteer Appreciation Picnic, Presidio Riding Club, April 28th, 9:00 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: February 14, 2019 minutes approved with corrections (see end of Minutes).

INFORMATION UPDATES

1. Marin County Parks.

The Draft 2019 Work Plan for the Road and Trail Management Plan (RTMP) Update will be presented to the Open Space Commission next week. Jon Campo gave an overview of the status of various projects in the plan:

- Mt. Burdell - The Middle Fire Road will be completed in 2019. The Eagle Rim Trail CEQA document has been completed. The implementation plan will be completed in late spring. The vegetation and wildlife surveys for Bowman Canyon have started and will inform trail planning.
- Roy's Redwoods - The design team is starting hydrology studies and visitor surveys, and will then start the Access Plan in 2019. A continuing public process is being outlined.

- The Spirit Rock Trail - A feasibility study is starting. The trail needs realignment. It is steep and in poor condition, but is still a popular equestrian trail.
- Ignacio Valley/Pacheco Valley – The Vegetation and Wildlife Assessments will inform trail planning. There are a lot of equestrians in this area. At the creek crossings, there are no bridges, and this is an issue. The trail to the popular Buck Falls needs improvement.
- Ponti Ridge – MCP is developing the CEQA documents now, and public review will begin soon.
- Cascade Canyon – Roads need improvements. MCP is applying for permits to improve creek crossings and to decrease sedimentation. Toyon Fire Road needs improvements in order to accommodate emergency vehicle access. Lower Cascade Canyon Road is in critical need of improvement, as well. CEQA document will be available in the summer of 2019.
- Terra Linda/Sleepy Hollow – A Vegetation and Wildlife Assessment will be completed to inform the trail planning. A number of social trails in this area need to be removed. A connection to remove a gap in Spring Hill Ridge trail will be made in summer 2019. MPC is considering a possible bike/hike trail to parallel the existing Fox Land trail. Although MCL ordinarily recommends against proliferation of trails, the parallel route would avoid having to modify the existing trail for multiuse safety (Nona commented on the popularity of the paved Mission Pass route as a transportation facility that connects Sleepy Hollow area with Terra Linda)
- Rush Creek – MPC continues to evaluate how to improve trail access through the Bahia Ridge end of the preserve, and also issues associated with improvements for inclusive access. It is likely that the Levee Trail will remain unimproved for now, and the breach in the levee will not be closed.
- Region 5 – Trail planning is complete for now.
- Region 6 – Ring Mountain is the major preserve for trail planning in this region. It is one of the most challenging trail planning regions due to the presence of rare plant populations, a multitude of social trails, heavy use by local dog walkers, and numerous points of entry. Staff is working on the draft trail designations.

E-Bike Policy

- Ari Golan of MCP outlined the proposed revision to Title 10 (10.05) of the County code which applies to county paved multiuse paths, but not to open space preserves. The proposal will be presented at the March 21st Parks and Open Space Commission meeting, with the intent of getting a recommendation to take to the Board of Supervisors in Spring/Summer 2019. The proposed is similar to the State Law, which allows Class 1 (pedal assist) and Class 2 (throttle assist).

Both classes are limited to 20 mph. MCP is concerned with safety and speed; however, the code revision would support the use of paved paths for commuting. A “Speed Spy” has been installed on the Mill Valley/Sausalito multi-use paved path to detect speeding bikes. Speeds have been reduced as a result. MCL does not have an established position on E-bikes on paved facilities, but opposes access on public open space roads and trails unless allowed under ADA disability law.

2. MMWD.

- MMWD fisheries biologist Eric Ettlinger presented a report on the results of fish monitoring in Lagunitas Creek and Walker Creek, with a summary of the life-cycle of coho and steelhead salmon and the occurrence of various species in Marin County. Overall, the populations are healthy, as measured by counting the redds (spawning gravels). The count for coho redds is the highest in 12 years. In 2008, the redd counts were dangerously low, so the rebound is great news!
- According to Aaron Fulton, the Azalea Hill project Neg Dec is not yet ready for Board action . Comments have been categorized. Changes to the document are minor. Some mitigation measures have been strengthened. The revised Neg Dec can be downloaded now with Comments and Responses. There is no funding to implement the project; however, approval of the CEQA document helps make the project competitive for grant funding.
- Shaun Horne announced that the Biodiversity, Fire and Fuel Integrated Plan (BFFIP) Draft EIR will be released for public comment for a six week period starting March 21st. A public meeting will be held on April 17th (since changed to April 10).

3. One Tam. The Coordinator for Volunteer Ambassadors Monica Stafford reported on her program. She manages the Roving Ranger Truck, as well. The objective of the Roving Ranger Truck is to “meet people where they are” – in the parks, at schools, at festivals, etc. Other news, One Tam has a new and improved web site.

4. State Parks. Friends of China Camp continues to be successful in managing and operating the State Park without any State funding. They rely on memberships, trail, parking, picnic and special event fees. In addition, they receive donations.

5. National Park Seashore. Jerry Meral, Inverness resident and long-time volunteer for the Point Reyes National Seashore, presented a plan for augmenting revenues for the part through a parking fee. He described the deferred maintenance issues and revenue constraints facing the Seashore. The Seashore has serious invasive species and historic preservation issues, and trail maintenance is failing to keep up with ruts and erosion. Because there are no entry or parking fees the Seashore has few ways to raise revenue. The Seashore legislation says “no entrance fees.” Parking fees could bring in \$5-\$7

million per year if instituted; however, this would be a controversial action. Meral suggested that various organizations (community and non-profits) collectively ask Congressman Jared Huffman to convene a forum to various means to enhance revenues for the Seashore. He will apprise MCL of next steps.

6. National Park Service (NPS). Mia Monroe announced that Redwood Creek had a great coho run in 2019, as a result of jumpstarting the population by relocating juveniles to an off-site nursery and then returning them to the creek as adults. Creek habitat enhancement projects will start this year. Through the parking reservation system, Muir Woods has successfully decreased total visitation by 20% over the past year.

Edits to February 14, 2019 Minutes

- *February 2019 minutes, Page 2, Bullet 3, edit as follows: Rush Creek OSP - A field trip to see the North Levee Trail was conducted in January by the Environmental Roundtable. ~~The group discussed possibilities for a bridge or boardwalk to cross the opening in the levee.~~ They discussed a possible a loop trail, and use of a fire trail to improve accessibility to the preserve. The group discussed possibilities for a bridge or boardwalk to cross the opening in the levee.*
- *MMWD is updating their 10-year capital program and needs to invest in infrastructure improvements to insure delivery of water. ~~The water pipes are 90 years old and require upgrading or replacement.~~ Parts of the infrastructure, including tanks, pumps, and 300 miles of the 900 mile system of water mains are 75-90 years old and have reached the end of their intended service life and require upgrading or replacement. The District is seeking new sources of revenue to address these needs. Reallocation of operating funds for capital projects is an option being evaluated. This could affect the number of field staff and potentially fire fuel management funding, for example. The Cost of Service Analysis will be presented in draft form on February 21st. A Two public workshops will follow. The District will seek community comments on the budget. In June, the Board will vote on the 10-year Capital Program. MCL will communicate its concerns as early as possible.*

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Minutes by Diane Kay

The next meeting is April 11th, 2019