



**OTAY VALLEY REGIONAL PARK (OVRP)  
JOINT POLICY-CITIZEN'S ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
July 19, 2018  
2:00 P.M.**

Meeting called to order at 2:18 pm by Policy Member Alvarez.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

- None

**AGENDA ITEMS**

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MAY 10, 2018  
MOTION TO APPROVE MAY 10, 2018 MINUTES with minor edits – Policy Member Alvarez, 2<sup>nd</sup> Policy Member Diaz  
ALL IN FAVOR – 2-0-0
  
2. CAC VACANCIES (County of San Diego-0, City of San Diego-1, City of Chula Vista-2)

No appointments made, appointments to fill current vacancies will be made at the next meeting.

3. OTAY DELTA RESTORATION PRESENTATION – River Partners

Ezra Neale of River Partners, Restoration Ecologist, presented on the Otay Delta Restoration Project, immediately adjacent to the western boundary of OVRP. River Partners is a non-profit based in Chico, CA, and has been working with the County since 2007. River Partners' focus is on large-scale restoration projects, typically sizing 50 to 1000 acres. Restoration projects mostly involve the planting of native trees and shrubs to reclaim areas that are highly degraded, with a combination of scientific habitat planning and agricultural practices. Neale shared photos of a typical restoration cycle, which involves three years of maintenance and monitoring. To date, River Partners has planted two million trees and restored over 12,000 acres, providing habitat to many endangered species.

The Otay Delta Restoration project spans 65 acres of riparian habitat. This project improves the habitat for a variety of neo-tropical migratory and resident birds. Neale explained the project objectives: 1) Identify and meet local community needs; 2) Ecological Resilience; and 3) Vegetation structure and pattern.

CAC member Kim Petersen inquired about the status of future river restoration in the City of Chula Vista. Neale replied that it is being reviewed as a future restoration opportunity. Invasive species would need to be removed, and there are a few good restoration sites for

active restoration. Petersen asked if the river in that area will ever come above ground, to which Neale replied that there is an opportunity for channel restoration but that is not a main focus for River Partners.

#### 4. OTAY RIVER RESTORATION PRESENTATION – ICF Presentation

Brian Hannegan from RRM Design Group (a subcontractor to ICF) presented on the Otay River Restoration Project being implemented by Homefed and the City of Chula Vista. Hannegan detailed an updated map on the River Restoration and associated supplemental trail system. Analysis to extend the project area further south is underway. RRM hopes to connect trails at the northern and eastern part of boundary with 4-foot multi-use paths and spine trails of 8-10 feet so there is enough room for maintenance vehicles or first responders.

Keoni Calantas, biologist with ICF, explained the work required before finalizing the Phase 2 design. ICF is continuing its archeological and cultural studies, and anticipates CEQA public review for Phase 2 in early 2019, followed by permitting. The Phase 2 buildout will hopefully begin in fall/winter 2019 (Phase 1 was completed in June 2018). Next steps include ongoing biological surveys. Calantas shared before-and-after photos of focus areas, showcasing cleanup, more defined access roads/future trails, and a new river crossing/road improvements for Border Patrol, SDG&E and other necessary vehicles. Major grading is complete and the main stem river channel is beginning to form.

Policy Member Diaz inquired about the spine trail design and if there was any consultation with CalFire because it looks like there is no room for firetrucks. Hannegan replied that CalFire is not a stakeholder so they were not consulted, however there are stabilized surfaces beyond the path that can be driven on, if needed.

Mark Kukuchek asked if water flows over the paths. Hannegan answered yes, the path is stable enough but permeable for water to move across. Kukuchek also inquired about planting. Planting will hopefully be done late fall/early winter 2018 if weather conditions permit.

CAC Member Schneider asked how many acres made up the restoration. Mitigation itself is approximately 300 acres, but current construction is approximately 100 acres.

CAC Member Sanchez inquired about whether helicopter pads would be considered for emergencies. Hannegan said they are not in the design of the River Restoration project. When asked if the use of drones would be allowed or an increase of rangers to monitor and patrol the area, Hannegan answered signage and fencing will be installed to help with access control. As additional trails and recreational amenities are added to OVRP, additional ranger staff will be provided by the JEPAs as applicable.

Policy Member Alvarez suggested to learn more about appropriate levels of rangers in ratio to visitors and acreage.

#### 5. MOTHER MIGUEL TRAIL REHABILITATION PROJECT – SDMBA/USFWS

Jose Galaz of San Diego Mountain Biking Association (SDMBA) presented on a new alignment for the Mother Miguel Trail. This rehabilitation project focuses on restoring areas that eroded from hikers using unauthorized trails. It is an ongoing project, and SDMBA will continue to work on the new trail alignment this fall/winter when trail maintenance conditions are better. SDMBA partnered with a group of high school students who helped dig the new trail. Sensitive plants were protected by careful removal and replanting away from the trail. To date, 75 volunteers have worked a total of 500 hours from March to June.

Jill Terp of United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) San Diego National Wildlife Refuge (SDNWR) reported that the Mother Miguel Trail was not part of the original proposed trail system at SDNWR, but it was included because of high public interest and SDMBA's support. Terp also encouraged CAC members and the public to "be gentle" with land managers because the vision of the Multiple Species Conservation Program did not predict so much use from mountain bikers and the public.

County staff member Victor Avina asked if the public signed a waiver. Galaz informed him that the volunteers all signed a waiver as volunteers of USFWS. Avina also inquired about the timeframe to complete the rehabilitation project. Galaz said if it is a dry winter, the rest of the lower section of the trail should be finished by the end of winter. Signs will be installed this winter to direct the public to stay on trail, in order to avoid other paths and spur trails.

#### 6. OTAY REGIONAL TRAIL ALIGNMENT STUDY PRESENTATION – County of San Diego

County Staff member Melanie Tylke, Project Manager for the Otay Regional Trail Alignment Study, presented the results of the second public workshop on June 20. She reviewed the guiding principles of the study, key environmental considerations, and trail planning process. One of the top comments received at the workshop was to retain the existing fisherman access pathways, instead of implementing a hybrid trail system as proposed at the workshop. The next steps include refining the trail system based on public comment and environmental review, writing the final planning document, and implementing the trails identified in the study. Implementation of the trails recommended in the final planning document is dependent on available funding from land owners and management agencies, among other considerations. Tylke thanked those members of the CAC who attended the workshop and reminded the group that public advocacy is important.

CAC Member Jack Bransford asked for photos, and Tylke informed him that all materials have been posted on the County website, [www.sdparks.org](http://www.sdparks.org) under the Public Meetings tab. Bransford mentioned they should also be posted to the OVRP website for better awareness.

#### 7. BIKE SKILLS PARK & COMMUNITY GARDEN UPDATES – County of San Diego

County staff member Renee Hilton gave a quick update on two potential projects. Rec Area 6 has been identified as a potential spot for the bike skills park within OVRP. \$500k has been allocated for the bike skills park by the County. Next steps would be to work with the City of Chula Vista, who owns the property, and begin public outreach. Policy Member Alvarez asked about the timeframe, and Hilton replied that the money was just received, so the next step is to define the project scope and determine project managers before a schedule is created. This would be the second County bike skills park, following the first bike skills park in Sweetwater.

The Community Garden has been supported by Sweetwater Planning Group, but there is no funding at this time. CAC Member Petersen asked what the estimated budget is, but Hilton replied that it is still unknown and will be determined in the following months.

#### 8. FRIENDS OF THE OVRP STATUS – County of San Diego

County staff member Hilton reported on the status of the Friends of the OVRP, as reviewed by the Executive Management Team (EMT). The EMT suggests to take the Friends website offline for now and look at a new structure and new options. The EMT reviewed the bylaws and structure of a 501(c)3. There are no board members currently operating under the 501(c)3 currently in place for the Friends. The Friends is still considered active because there is one more year of filing, but it has been at least four years since they have received any funding for any events or projects. Legal counsel from the County was consulted as to whether the Policy Committee has any authority to take action regarding the Friends group, and unfortunately no jurisdictions have authority, and there are no options to change the existing Friends group. Donation boxes should be assessed for removal. Donations can be made to Parks Society for now, which has a separate line item for OVRP.

The EMT recommends to remove the Friends of the OVRP Status update from future agendas because there have been no updates and no reports.

Policy Member Alvarez motioned to remove “Friends of the OVRP Status” from future agendas, Policy Member Diaz 2<sup>nd</sup>. ALL IN FAVOR 2-0-0

#### 9. RANGER REPORTS

- Mika Shimada, City of San Diego, Western OVRP  
The 8<sup>th</sup> Annual OVRP Day was held on May 19<sup>th</sup>, and Ranger Shimada gave a big thanks to all involved. CAC Member Emma Reese brought a horse to the event. The public could take photos with Ranger R.T. Hawk. Ranger Shimada said they were so grateful to the volunteers that they gave out special shirts to them.

A new group from Living Word Community Church began volunteering in June and plans to help once a month, through the new adopt a pond concept.

- Lauren Raduc, County of San Diego, Eastern OVRP  
Outreach programs and nature touch tables on weekends and Sunday hikes with Ranger Raduc have continued through the summer. The Sunday hike treks up to the reservoir, Ranger Raduc discusses the history of the park, then the hike leads down to views of the eastern valley and end at Otay Lakes County Park.

The first movie in the park featured “The Lion King” on June 22<sup>nd</sup> and was attended by 200 people. The next events will be on September 8<sup>th</sup> featuring “Back to the Future” and October 20<sup>th</sup> featuring “Hotel Transylvania”. The October event will include face painting, pumpkin décor, and a costume contest.

Ranger Raduc reported on the revegetation of the hillside below main lawn, using irrigation with drip line systems and planting native plants. This system saves water and requires less maintenance so that more projects in the park can be worked on. Each

weekend, there are many events, and Ranger Raduc assured the group that they concentrate a lot of energy on weekends so that every visitor has the best experience.

#### 10. CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

No report.

#### 11. CAC MEMBER COMMENTS

- CAC Member Joan Schneider announced that the next CAC meeting will be on September 27<sup>th</sup> at 2:30pm Montgomery Waller Rec-Center.
- Introduction of new deputy director for City of San Diego Open Space Division— Jeannette DeAngelis taking over for Casey Smith. Casey will be transitioning to the Developed Regional Parks Division.

#### 12. REQUEST FOR AGENDA ITEMS FOR UPCOMING MEETINGS

- None.
- Next meeting is on November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018; City of Chula Vista City Hall Council Chambers

ADJOURNMENT – 4:12 pm

#### OVRP PC MEMBER ATTENDEES

Councilman Alvarez                      Councilman Diaz

#### CAC MEMBER ATTENDEES

Jack Bransford	Robert Miller	Natalie Roberts-Decarli
John Zarem	Vinit Jensen	Michael McCoy
Kim Peterson	Omar Sanchez	Emma Reese
Ben Vallejos	Jose Galaz	Joan Schneider
Alfredo Perez	Darin Gray	John Vogel
Maria Mendoza		

#### STAFF PRESENT

Renee Hilton	Casey Smith	Kelly Broughton
Melanie Tylke	Mika Shimada	Michael Walker
Joanne Emerick	Laura Ball	Jeannette DeAngelis
Crystal Benham	Ruth Martin	Cheryl Goddard
Victor Avina		

#### PUBLIC ATTENDEES

Mark Kukuchek	Keoni Calantas	Brian Hannegan
Jill Terp	Dylan Corbin	