

# PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

May 10, 2019

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## MINUTES

1. Call to Order – 8:32am
2. OPPORTUNITY FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO SPEAK
  - None
3. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS ON ANY ITEM NOT ON TODAY'S AGENDA
  - Committee Member Davis commented that his property in Iowa is undergoing water problems in the area and surrounding states. FEMA is currently involved.
  - Committee Member Spaeth brought up an incident at Mt. Gower that involved bikers coming down hills too quickly and scaring horses. It is very dangerous if bicyclists do not yield properly. He believes the issue is that too many trails are defined as “mixed use” – some trails should be separate and specific to bikers or equestrians only.
  - Committee Member Spaeth attended meetings with Supervisor Jacob regarding the Bandy Canyon eagles. He stated that Supervisor Jacob does not want the Bandy Canyon Monitoring consolidating with the South County Monitoring. Recently, they have been monitoring the Bandy Canyon nest by drone. The Ramona Park Rangers recently contacted the private property owner to stop the drone monitoring. Community members would like better communication from parks and recreation with property so that things can be done in a non-confrontational manner. Director Albright responded that the County owns an open space easement on property adjacent to the nest. DPR received reports of people violating the easement and trespassing on the property. It is incumbent upon the County, pursuant to the terms of the easement, to enforce it. Enforcement actions, in general, are not under purview of the PAC; so it is not incumbent upon the County to inform the PAC about enforcement actions. Also, the South County Study is a regional study led by USGS, separate from the Bandy Canyon Monitoring Study by the County.
  - Committee Member Hutsel thanked the County for its participation in this weekend's kick-off of the San Diego River Days Event. There are more than 50 events over two weekends, many of which are DPR activities. He is grateful for the partnership.
  - Committee Member Hector and Committee Member Hutsel attended a meeting held by Supervisor Fletcher with his advisory teams. It was a great opportunity to meet other District 4 advisory committee members. Supervisor Fletcher wants to create a synergy among the different groups, and these meetings will occur regularly going forward.
  - Committee Member Hector is on the Board for Boosters of Old Town San Diego State Historic Park (BOOT), the nonprofit cooperating association that supports the state park. She thinks there is great opportunity for DPR to collaborate with Old Town San Diego State Historic Park on upcoming summer events, such as the Founders Day event July 13<sup>th</sup>. Director Albright was in agreement that collaboration would be good to pursue.
  - Chairman Goad announced that Committee Member Long was appointed as Chair of the Encinitas Parks & Recreation Commission.
  - Chairman Goad attended the Trails & Greenways Conference and enjoyed hearing from the professionals on how they develop new trails in natural areas. He also mentioned that

a big topic of discussion was the sharing of multiuse trails. He highly encouraged the PAC members to attend future conferences.

- Chairman Goad brought up that there is a Rancho Santa Fe Road Task Force in Encinitas for establishing community character and functionality of the roadway. One item of discussion amongst the Encinitas Parks & Recreation Commission is a viewing station being put in by the developer but no trail or public access to the viewing station. If there is a public usage area, would that be an automatic head's up for developers to put in a trail?
- Chairman Goad also attended a street fair as part of the Encinitas Trails Coalition, where they sold maps to raise money to support trails connections in Encinitas.
- Chairman Goad commented on two big trails being developed: One on El Camino del Norte, down to the bridge that crosses Escondido Creek; and another trail along Rancho Santa Fe Road.
- Committee Member McCoy announced that OVRP Day will be on May 18<sup>th</sup>. He encouraged the PAC members to attend.
- Committee Member McCoy also brought up the mountain biking issue on trails regarding wildlife impact, which is becoming more of a problem. He mentioned a community that set up a Green Sticker fund at the State level. We need to start thinking about the separation of mountain biking excursions from wildlife, horses and hikers. We want to be preventative, not wait until incidents happen. Director Albright responded that the County has evaluated OHV-potential designated areas, and the Board recognized that it is a legitimate recreation activity but that it's best left to the State to handle. The County has no compelling reason to be involved. Director Albright suggested that the concept of what fits best for which agency can be brought up as a future agenda item. This discussion would include a list of recreational activities within the County that DPR has determined not to directly provide services to, but instead let other agencies handle.
- Committee Member Hutsel piggybacked on Green Sticker fees and the inability to locate OHV parks in San Diego County. What if there was an expansion to include mechanized vehicle, such as bikes, in Green Sticker fees? Then those funds can create single-use trails to support the bike community. Committee Member McCoy requested this topic be a future agenda item.
- Committee Member Long attended the CPRS Conference representing the City of Encinitas. He was able to connect with DPR Chief Knopp while he was there. One specific reason Committee Member Long attended was to learn more about service animals – what defines a service animal, cities have conflicts with enforcing rules regarding service animals.

#### 4. APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 8, 2019 MINUTES

MOTION TO APPROVE THE MARCH 8, 2019 MINUTES – Chairman Doug

- Committee Member Davis motioned to approve with minor edits; Committee Member Hutsel seconded.

ALL IN FAVOR – 7 – 0 – 0

#### 5. PLDO & CSA FUND BALANCE REPORTS

- Director Albright discussed one significant budgeting item. The CFO decided to budget PLDO upfront in the year as part of the County's annual Operating Budget. This creates a slight challenge as we will now need to budget projects before they have even been evaluated. Looking at the Op Plan, it can be seen now that several million dollars is budgeted in PLDO, but specific projects have not been identified. There is approximately \$6M allocated for acquiring land in the San Dieguito planning area; \$700k to acquire land

in the Twin Oaks planning area; and \$1M to acquire land for a local park or skate park in the Fallbrook planning area. No parcels have been identified for any of these projects.

- Committee Member Hutsel asked what the ramifications would be because of this change. Director Albright answered that it essentially creates duplicate actions - the old process still has to happen, but additionally now the upfront allocation of money also needs to happen, which requires Board action. Just the allocation of monies needs to happen during the fiscal year, not project completion.

#### 6. DEPARTMENT REPORT – Brian Albright, Director

- Last week, the Board approved the Lindo Lake Restoration Project, Phase I (East Basin). Material will be excavated to create native vegetation berms, and the rest will mostly be exported. This is one of the most important projects in the Op Plan as it restores the only natural lake in San Diego County.
- The Sweetwater Bike Park Groundbreaking took place yesterday May 9<sup>th</sup>. Fifty people from the community attended. There will be a ribbon cutting ceremony before the end of the year.
- Director Albright met recently with USD, whose real estate department is #1 in country, to discuss a potential partnership program for Heritage Park to renovate the interior of the buildings and complete the long-term vision to turn each of the buildings into historic Bed & Breakfasts or inns accessible to public. The County has done a few RFPs over the years but received unfair proposals. Partnering with USD would be a great opportunity to consult with their creative minds. It is good to know Committee Member Hector's involvement with Heritage Park for future discussions.
- Board Items
  - May 22: 1<sup>st</sup> hearing for Skyline Acquisition, which is 267 acres of Hermes Copper butterfly habitat for the MSCP. The 2<sup>nd</sup> hearing is on June 5.
  - May 22: Presenting the 2018 MSCP South County Sub-Area Annual Report. Beginning next year, the report will be by fiscal year instead of calendar year.
  - June 5: 2<sup>nd</sup> hearing for the acquisition of 123 acres on the north side Ramona Grasslands Preserve.
  - June 5: 2<sup>nd</sup> hearing for acquisition of 20 acres in San Luis Rey to help complete the trail connection from I-15 to Oceanside border.
- Director Albright followed up on Committee Member Hutsel's inquiry on prevailing wage and the CIVICS program from the last meeting. DPR checked with County Counsel and it was determined that the program is not affected by CA Prevailing Wage Law because it is not a work release program; they are inmates under supervision of the Sheriff's Department, therefore Penal Code Section 4019 takes precedence.
- The Annual Parks & Recreation Champion Awards will take place on July 11<sup>th</sup> at Heritage Park. More info will be given at the next meeting.
- Today is the 5-year Anniversary of the Waterfront Park opening. There is a celebration at 3pm today, with a short speaking section at 4pm. There will be music and activities for families.
- The County's Office of Audits and Advisory Services is completing a review of all County advisory committees and commissions, including the PAC. They will be looking into the by-laws, framework, usefulness and contribution of each committee, making sure each are serving their purpose. Director Albright gave his positive feedback on the PAC.
- This will be Secretary Joanne Emerick's last meeting for a while before she goes on maternity leave.
- Committee Member Hutsel asked Director Albright to comment on the Mission Trails appointment. Due to oversight, this did not make it onto the agenda for today's meeting,

but it will be included on next month's agenda. Director Albright mentioned that the appointment, pursuant to Board protocol, should be presented first to D2 and D3 members. However if there no willingness or interest, it may go to a different appointee. The PAC members may consider this for the next meeting.

- Committee Member McCoy asked for an update on the TJ Campground. Director Albright mentioned at the last meeting that the Coastal Conservancy approved the low-cost coastal accommodations grant to complete the campground. Construction will not begin until later in the summer once the City issues the coastal development permit.

#### 7. TRANSNET – Kim Smith, Senior Environmental Planner, SANDAG

- Chairman Goad wanted to invite Kim Smith to present to the PAC after seeing her presentation at the Encinitas Parks & Recreation Commission.
- Ms. Smith presented on the TransNet Environmental Mitigation Program (EMP) – a 40-year program with an \$850M budget. \$650M is allocated to a transportation project mitigation fund; and \$200M is allocated to a regional habitat conservation fund.
- The EMP is 10 years in and so far successful. They acquired land with wildlife habitat early on to reduce costs, accelerate delivery, implement habitat plans, reduce the list of endangered species.
- Transportation Mitigation Fund Accomplishments
  - ◆ 40 sites preserved
  - ◆ 8,780 acres conserved
  - ◆ 800 acres habitat restored
  - ◆ \$161M invested in open space acquisitions
  - ◆ \$41M leveraged from conservation partners for acquisitions
- Accomplishments within San Diego County
  - ◆ Land acquisitions adjacent to the SLRR Corridor
  - ◆ Wildlife under-crossings, directional fencing and wildlife escape ramps
  - ◆ Construction began on SEL Restoration Project to improve quality of lagoon and improve habitat. This project is entirely funded by EMP.
  - ◆ 12 acres of wetland restoration and enhancement within TRVRP
- Regional Habitat Conservation Fund (RHCF)
  - ◆ There is a MOA signed in 2008, amended in 2013 and 2019. Implements the strategy for the entire EMP. It includes an allocation of \$4M annually for the next 20 years of the program to assist in funding the gaps. The EMP Work Group develops a 2-Year Work Plan, which gets approved by the SANDAG Board.
  - ◆ 2-Year Work Plan defines goals and tracks progress.
    - Strategic Goals: Promote key sensitive species, Promote native vegetation communities, Improve wildlife movement, and Promote regional collaboration
- RHCF Accomplishments
  - ◆ 117 grants awards throughout region, distributed throughout the County. Work includes signage, fencing, exotic species removal, native species planted.
  - ◆ Within the County: 13 grants totaling \$1.5M from 2006-19. Includes cactus restoration and habitat restoration after wildfire.
  - ◆ The 10<sup>th</sup> cycle of the grant program will occur next Spring 2020.
- There is an EMP Working Group that advises the Regional Planning Committee on issues related to implementation of the EMP. They meet every second Tuesday from 1:00-3:00pm every other month (odd months).

- Committee Member McCoy asked if the program is enhanced by coupling with the MSCP and USFW. Ms. Smith answered that the MOA is an agreement between SANDAG, Caltrans, USFW and CDFW – each agency has members that sit on the working groups. They assist in many things, such as identifying large acquisitions and mitigations.
- Committee Member McCoy asked if there has been a corridor implemented underneath I-15. Ms. Smith commented UC Davis is being funded through RCHF to do studies on the 76, 78, and I-15. There is definite involvement, coordinating regionally and partnering with the jurisdictions. There is a Road Connectivity Working Group that is involved with this.
- Committee Member Hutsel thanked Ms. Smith for her presentation. He mentioned that when the Conservancy Resources Network was formed, there used to be two non-profit community seats on the committee, which does not seem to be active anymore. Ms. Smith is unsure of what happened but knows Ann Harvey is now with a different conservation network, and still sits on the working group.

ADJOURNMENT – 9:53 am

ATTENDEES:

Doug Goad, Chair District 3

Mike McCoy, District 1

Ed Spaeth, District 2

Bert Long, District 3

Rob Hutsel, District 4

Susan Hector, District 4

Paul Davis, District 5

Kim Smith, SANDAG

Brian Albright, County of San Diego Parks and Recreation

Joanne Emerick, County of San Diego Parks and Recreation