



Photo: Craig Sollin

A frosty winter morning at Stafford Lake Park.

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Director's Message

Greetings! The new year brings new faces and new projects to Marin County Parks, and new funds to our local park partners in Marin, all thanks to Measure A. January will mark the first disbursement of Measure A funds to cities, towns, and special districts to help support their park and recreation programs, facilities, and services. Our own Marin County Parks family has increased with nine new rangers—five funded by Measure A—to enhance visitor services in the parks and open space preserves. Our Draft Road and Trail Management Plan is undergoing public review and refinement, as is the Draft Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Plan. Measure A funds and our continuing collaboration with local fire agencies have resulted in new fire fuel (vegetation) management projects in



Photo: Craig Sollin

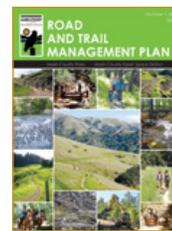
Roy's Redwoods Loop Trail is the perfect setting for a holiday hike.

southern Marin. Several small but exciting acquisition opportunities are being negotiated with land owners, all with significant private donor involvement. And a new grant program to underwrite parks and recreation activities in underserved communities is launching. PLUS, this spring, work will commence on the Stafford Lake Bike Park, albeit only a first phase—necessary fundraising is still short of the total needed to realize our dream park. These are exciting times for us to serve you. Get outside and enjoy your Marin County parks and preserves through the holidays. See you on the trail!

Sincerely,
Linda Dahl, *Director and General Manager*

Management Plans Released, Environmental Review Underway

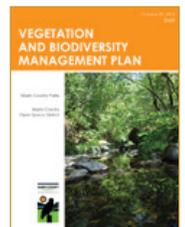
October 2013 was historic for Marin County Parks and the Open Space District. After three years of planning, community workshops, and study, we released our Draft Road and Trail Management Plan (RTMP) on the 1st and released our Draft Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Plan (VBMP) on the 29th. Before the plans can be approved by the Board of Supervisors, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires each plan to be reviewed for their potential effects on the environment. Environmental review is a multi-step public process; we are further along in the process for the Draft RTMP than we are for the Draft VBMP.



RTMP: we released its Draft Tiered Program Environmental Impact Report (TPEIR) in tandem with the plan on the 1st. Written comments on the TPEIR must be received by 4:30 p.m. December 2, 2013.

Through winter, staff will prepare a Response to Comments that will become part of the TPEIR to be released in spring 2014.

VBMP: through January 21, 2014 we are soliciting public comment on the scope of issues that the VBMP TPEIR should address. The Parks and Open Space Commission will hold a meeting on December 3, 2013 at 6:00 p.m. for this purpose. For more information, visit marincountyparks.org or contact Chief of Natural Resources and Science **Mischon Martin** at MMartin@marincounty.org or **(415) 473-2056**.



Measure A: A Foundation for Success and Transparency

MARIN COUNTY
PARKS
PRESERVATION · RECREATION



CARING FOR WHAT WE HAVE
· 2012-2021 ·

Over the last several months we have been developing the essential programs and procedures that will deliver Measure A funds to our community partners. In January Measure A funds will begin to flow to Marin's cities, towns, and applicable special districts; conservation partners; and community organizations. As for the County's own parks and preserves, Measure A is already having an impact.

Parks and Open Space Program: One of our commitments is to enhance land stewardship using local workforce development and employment opportunities. We recently finalized a contract with Conservation Corps North Bay for work on Measure A projects that includes restoring areas damaged by the construction of unauthorized trails, clearing creeks and drains behind homes that border the preserves in preparation for winter rains, performing mowing and other vegetation management work at hundreds of preserve entries in preparation for next year's fire season, and reducing fire fuel loads in fuel breaks in the King Mountain, Blithedale Summit, Baltimore Canyon, and Camino Alto preserves. We have already hired new rangers, biologists, and planners to support Measure A projects and keep our commitments to voters.

City, Town, and Special District Program: Participants are signing grant agreements and preparing work plans to begin using funds to care for their parks, preserves, and recreation programs. We'll begin reporting on the great work our partners are doing in the near future.

Farmland Preservation Program: This grant program is in the final stages of review. Potential projects are already waiting in the wings and will be considered for funding as early as January.

Community Oversight Committee: After the end of each fiscal year, we will work with a seven-member committee to perform an independent audit, review how Measure A funds were spent to ensure compliance with the expenditure plan, and compile a report detailing Measure A projects and expenditures. Transparency and compliance with the Measure A ordinance are very important to us, and this committee will independently verify the appropriate use of Measure A funds. Want to be involved? We are looking for applicants to sit on the Community Oversight Committee. Visit marincounty.org and enter "About Boards and Commissions" in the search box or contact External Affairs Coordinator **Kevin Wright** at KWright@marincounty.org or **(415) 473-2129** for more information. Also, discussions

about next year's budget priorities are about to begin. Starting in January, there will be several opportunities to be involved in the review of next year's Measure A budget.

Measure A Has an Identity! Start looking for this logo at your favorite parks and preserves. It will appear on signs and other materials so you know where Measure A funds are being spent, and can see the positive results the community's tax dollars are bringing to the places we love and want to protect. Each year, an annual report will showcase Measure A projects and provide information for you to take yourself on a tour of all the great work! Finally, our website will become a central clearinghouse for Measure A information. Look for new and expanded information and more content early next year at marincountyparks.org.



Goats Take a Bite Out of Broom

On a Sunday afternoon in early October, the horses of Horse Hill Preserve, decades-long tenants of this bucolic spot in Mill Valley, watched with curiosity as 10 tiny but temporary neighbors (Boer



Photo: Matt Sagues

The goat enclosure before grazing.

goats) and their massive Great Pyrenees guardian dog Danny moved in to a 2,500 square-foot enclosure on the preserve. The goats—five adults and five kids—arrival marked the start of a 30-day pilot project to reduce an infestation of Scotch broom, an invasive, nonnative plant that is a problem for land management agencies throughout Marin. (At places like Horse Hill, this noxious weed not only competes with native plants but reduces forage for horses, which will not eat broom.) The goats wasted no time in getting to work. They immediately took to the broom, and at the end of 30 days, they had consumed more than 80% of it!

Resource specialist Matt Sagues and seasonal ranger assistant Erik Carlsen teamed up to manage the grazing activity. Carlsen has been running livestock in his spare time since he



Photo: Craig Solin

The goat enclosure after grazing.

was a teenager in Point Reyes. His experience was key—leasing the goats, setting up the pen, ensuring the safety of the goats, and monitoring their progress. Resource management staff will observe the broom stumps over the winter to measure the impact of the grazing treatment and collect data for this study. The VBMP will provide guidance to our staff about vegetation management projects just like this. Effective invasive plant control requires the integration of several types of treatments in a site-specific, multi-year program. We recognize the value of an integrated pest management (IPM) approach that considers all tools to manage vegetation on open space preserves.

The goats and Danny were unexpectedly popular with visitors to Horse Hill, the neighboring community, and local schools. Look for the goats (and Danny) to reprise their roles as weed-eaters at Horse Hill and King Mountain preserves in spring 2014!



Photo: Matt Sagues

The goats at work.

Trail Provides STEM Learning Opportunity

One of the measures of our success in implementing the RTMP will be the use of volunteers to maintain public roads and trails. This winter and spring, volunteer coordinator Greg Reza and the open space trail crew will partner with the San Marin High School Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) program to improve a segment of the Big Trees Trail in the Indian Tree Preserve. Sixty students will install water bars and perform other maintenance work to improve drainage, reduce soil erosion, and prevent sediment from entering streams. Simultaneously the students will learn about trail design as they study engineering in the classroom. San Marin physics and engineering teacher Nick Williams is “thrilled that our students have the opportunity to put the concepts we’ve been studying in class into action with hands-on work that can benefit our community.”

Stafford Lake Bike Park Update

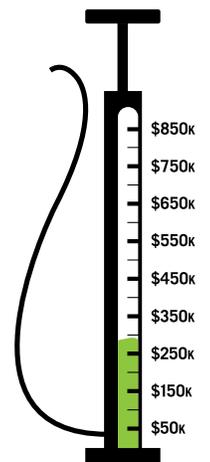
There is lots of exciting news to report!

Fundraising: Marin County Parks received a \$25,000 sponsorship from Wilderness Trail Bikes on October 22. A total of \$290,000 has been raised towards our goal of \$850,000.

The nonprofit Friends of Stafford Lake Bike Park (Friends) group is working hard to raise even more money. They are lining up exciting new prospects and exploring grants that just opened for nonprofits. **Design:** our landscape architects are going through final construction drawings right now, making a few modifications, and finding ways to reduce construction costs and ensure compliance with environmental review and permit requirements. The International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) has been hired to perform peer review of the final drawings to ensure “build-ability” and to help develop design and performance specifications to create “ride-able” trails and features once built.

Construction: we are negotiating with a potential consultant to assist staff during building by providing the bikers’ point of view. This consultant has experience working with professional mountain bikers who have built pump tracks and bike park features. Construction will start in spring 2014 on portions of the 17-acre park. We will continue to develop a construction phasing plan with the Friends group as funds become available in the future.

Volunteer: we are working with professional rider Mark Weir to develop volunteer opportunities once construction breaks ground and gets underway.



FEATURED EVENTS

THIS IS ONLY A PARTIAL LIST OF OUR EVENTS.
GET THE COMPLETE LIST



THIS LOGO INDICATES A
HEALTHY PARKS, HEALTHY
PEOPLE BAY AREA EVENT

Volunteer

SAT, DEC 7. 9AM TO 1PM

Old Saint Hilary's Broom Bust

SAT, JAN 18. 9AM TO 12PM

Creekside Restoration with
Save The Bay

SAT, JAN 25. 10AM TO 1PM

Ring Mountain Grassland
Restoration Project



Photo: Sam Abercrombie

Girl Scouts planting natives at
Ring Mountain.

SAT, FEB 1. 10AM TO 2PM

Yoga in the Park

SAT, FEB 15. 9AM TO 1PM

Rick's Broom Patch Terra
Linda/Sleepy Hollow

SUN, FEB 23. 9AM TO 1PM

Tiburon Uplands Broom Pull

EVENT ACCOMMODATIONS:

Events and/or locations may have limited accessibility to persons with disabilities. If you require accommodations to participate in an activity, or materials in alternate formats, contact **Steve Pettele**, not less than four work days in advance of event: **(415) 473-6387**, **TTY (415) 473-2495, CRS 711**, or **SPettele@marincounty.org**.

Naturalist Walks

THUR, DEC 5. 10AM TO 2PM

Mushrooms at Indian Tree

MON, DEC 30. 10AM TO 1PM

Birds at Bothin Marsh

SAT, JAN 11. 10AM TO 2PM

Birds at Rush Creek

WED, FEB 12. 10AM TO 2PM

Steelhead at Cascade Canyon

Family Walks

TUES, DEC 17. 10AM TO 1PM

Nature for Kids: Salmon of
Lagunitas Creek

SAT, JAN 4. 10AM TO 1PM

Nature for Kids:
Deer Island

MON, JAN 20. 10AM TO 1PM

Nature for Kids: Rush Creek

SAT, FEB 8. 10AM TO 2PM

Nature for Kids: Indian Valley

MON, FEB 17. 10AM TO 2PM

Nature for Kids: Mt. Burdell

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Photo: Shannon Burke

A look at what the rains can bring.

FOR MORE EVENTS & EVENT DETAILS

including description, directions, and cancellation information, please visit marincountyparks.org and click on [events calendar](#). High fire danger or rain may cause cancellation of events.

Ranger Activities



Photo: Adam Craig

Pro skateboarder Matt Field teaching kids how to do pump up and down transitions.

SAT, JAN 11. 3:30PM TO 6PM

Evening on the Hoo-Koo-E-Koo Trail

SAT, JAN 18. 4PM TO 6PM

Birds and History at Rush Creek

SAT, JAN 25. 10AM TO 12PM

Junior Ranger: The Uses of Native Plants

SAT, JAN 25. 9AM TO 4PM

Stafford Winter Classic

SUN, FEB. 16. 11AM TO 1PM

Learn to Ride at McInnis Skate Park

MON, FEB 17. 9AM TO 12PM

Presidents Day Stand Up Paddle Races



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