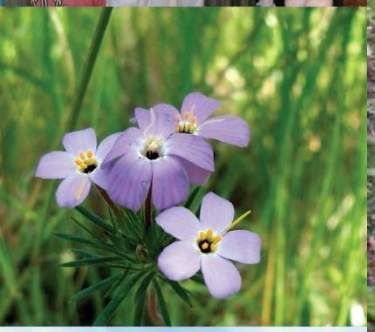
Marin County Parks and Open Space



PROTECT
GROW
RESTORE
CONNECT

Road and Trail Management Plan / Environmental Impact Report: CEQA Public Scoping Meeting

February 15, 2011

Welcome!

AGENDA

3:00pm **Welcome, Introductions, and Purpose of RTMP/EIR**
Linda Dahl, Director and General Manager

3:15pm **Planning and CEQA Process for the RTMP/EIR**
Elise Holland, Planning and Resource Chief

4-6:00pm **Information and Public Comment Stations**

6:00pm **Welcome, Introductions, and Purpose of RTMP/EIR**
Linda Dahl, Director and General Manager

6:15pm **Planning and CEQA Process for the RTMP/EIR**
Elise Holland, Planning and Resource Chief

7-7:30pm **Information and Comment Stations**

7:30pm **Meeting Adjourns**

Purpose of Meeting

- To inform the public and regulatory agencies about the *concurrent* Road and Trail Management Plan (RTMP) & Environmental Impact Report (EIR)
- To provide an opportunity for the public and agencies to submit written and oral CEQA scoping comments

RTMP/EIR Project Snapshot

- Internal Scoping – Summer 2010
- Initiate Data Assembly and Collection
- First Public Workshops – November 2010
- CEQA Public Scoping – February 2011
- 4 Public Workshops – Spring 2011 through Summer 2012
- Draft RTMP/EIR – Fall 2012
- Final RTMP/EIR – Summer 2013

Meeting Ground Rules

- All participants, including the County, agree to:
  - show respect to all who participate
  - listen to and hear all ideas with an open mind
  - separate individuals and/or organizations from the problems
  - focus on interests rather than positions
  - move forward – learn from the past, but do not sacrifice future progress to it
  - work toward solutions with integrity
  - stay on topic

MCOSD Mission

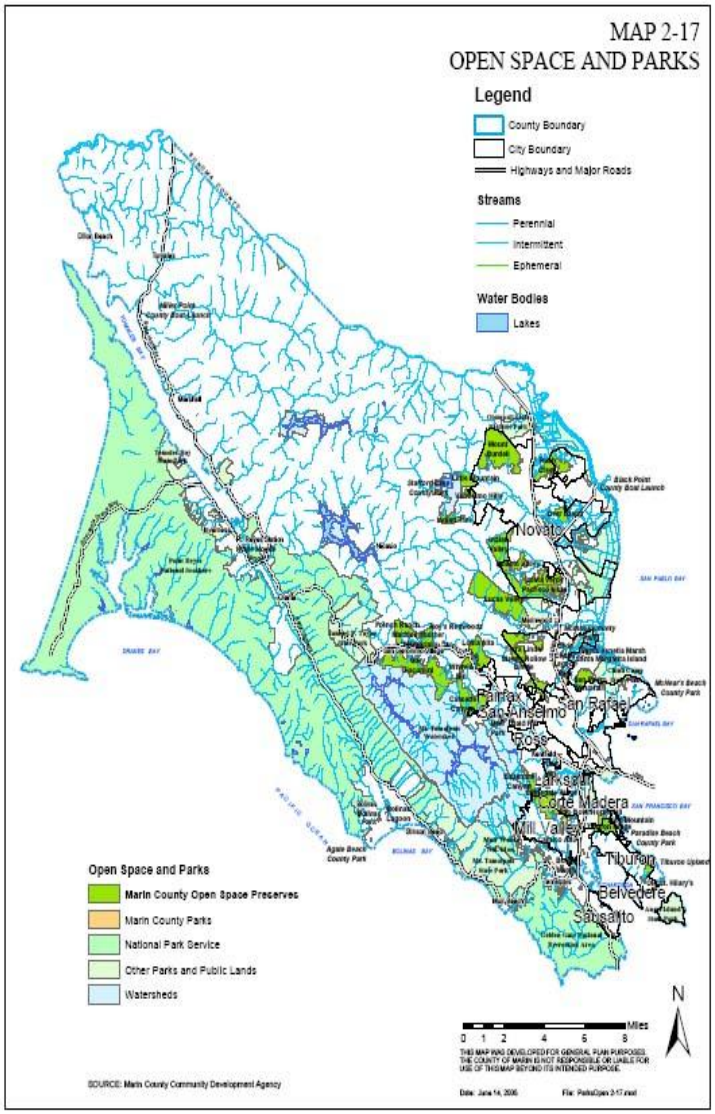
We are dedicated to educating, inspiring, and engaging the people of Marin in the shared commitment of preserving, protecting and enriching the natural beauty of Marin's parks and open spaces, and providing recreational opportunities for the enjoyment of all generations.

MCOSD - Background and Overview

- What is the MCOSD?
  - The County's vehicle for acquiring and managing lands of environmental significance identified in the Marin Countywide Plan
  - A tax-supported public agency
    - Governed by 5-member board of directors
    - Functions pursuant to California Public Resources Code Section 5500
    - Established in 1972 (40 yrs. in 2012!)

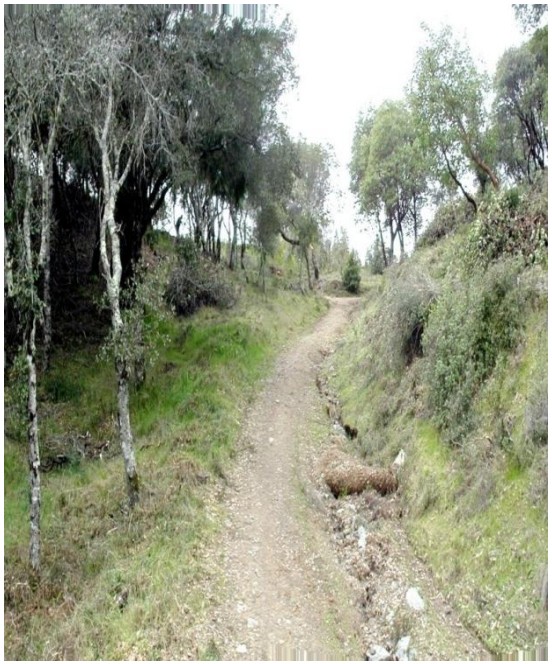
MCOSD Background and Overview

- Accomplishments
  - Acquired nearly 16,000 acres of open space land
  - Protected thousands more acres with conservation easements
  - Protected ecosystem functions
  - Provided more than 200 miles of unpaved roads and trails for access and recreation



Road and Trail Network

- Unpaved roads and trails inherited as lands were acquired
- Function for fire protection, maintenance, emergency and utility access, recreation



What is the RTMP/EIR?

- The Road and Trail Management Plan and Environmental Impact Report will direct future use and management of roads and trails on the District's 34 preserves.
- The RTMP/EIR will employ extensive public involvement, and will incorporate the District's mission and policies, the Marin Countywide Plan, community preferences, natural resources goals, and the best available science.

Consistency with Plans & Policies

- Development of a RTMP/EIR is consistent with the following plans and policies:
  - **Marin Countywide Plan** (June 2007)
  - **Marin County Department of Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan** (June 2008)
  - **MCOSD's Resource Management Framework** (September 2008)
  - **MCOSD's Policy Review Initiative** (May 2005)

Purpose of RTMP/EIR

- Effectively allocate increasingly limited financial resources to address high priority projects
- Coordinate with and support efforts of other public land managers in Marin
- Address trail access and safety issues, while protecting important natural resources

Planning and CEQA Process

- OVERVIEW OF PLANNING PROCESS
- OVERVIEW OF CEQA PROCESS
- HOW TO COMMENT ON SCOPE OF THE PROJECT

Planning Process – Existing Conditions

- Road and Trail Inventory and Assessment
  - physical condition of roads and trails
- Visitor Use Survey
  - Opportunities and intensity
- Vegetation and Resource Data
  - Plant communities, habitat types, special status (plant and animal) species

Planning Process – Desired Conditions

- Determine Range of Acceptable/Desired Resource Conditions
- Determine Range of Acceptable/Desired Recreation Experiences

Planning Process

- Explore ways to move from ***existing*** to ***appropriate/desired*** conditions
- Analyze (through CEQA process) relative advantages of modifications and activities (e.g., restoration, new trail connections, policy changes)
- Prioritize actions

CEQA Basics

- Inform governmental decision makers and the public about potential, significant environmental effects of proposed activities
- Identify means by which environmental effects can be avoided or reduced
- Disclose to the public the reasons why a governmental agency approved the project

Environmental Impact Report (EIR)

- Pursuant to CEQA, the EIR is intended “to inform the public and responsible officials of the environmental consequences of their decisions before they are made.”
- By issuing a Notice of Preparation (NOP), the lead agency contacts responsible and trustee agencies and invites their input regarding content of the draft EIR.

Primary Procedural EIR "Tools"

- Initial Study
- Notice of Preparation (NOP)
- Draft EIR
- Public Review of Draft EIR
- Written Response to Comments
- Certification of Final EIR
- Findings
- Mitigation, Monitoring & Reporting Program

Range of Alternatives

- "An EIR must describe reasonable range of alternatives to the project that could feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project while avoiding or substantially lessening any of the significant effects of the project".
  - *CEQA Guidelines sec 15126.6(a)a.*

Timing of Preparation

- CEQA requires agencies to prepare EIRs “as early as feasible in the planning process to enable environmental considerations to influence project program and design and yet late enough to provide meaningful information for environmental assessment.”
  - *CEQA Guidelines, sec. 15004(b)*

Timing of Preparation

- "EIR preparation and review should run concurrently, not consecutively with the project planning, review and approval process."
  - *CEQA Guidelines, sec. 15004(c)*

Comments on Scoping

- To have comments formally considered in scoping of the project, they must be either submitted in writing or orally recorded
- Comment form for written comments
- Comment by letter (March 4th)
- Recording station for oral comments

Project Timeline

- CEQA NOP Scoping: **Feb. 1- Mar. 4, 2011**
- Draft RTMP/EIR: **Fall 2010 – Fall 2012**
- Public Review of Draft EIR and Written Response to Comments: **Oct. – Dec. 2012**
- Final RTMP/EIR: **Summer 2013**
- File Notice of Determination and CEQA Findings: **Summer 2013**
- Adoption by MCOSD Board of Directors

Next Public Workshop

- Saturday March 26th
- Marin Wellness Center
- 9:00am - 2:00pm
- Topic of Discussion
  - Determining the Range of Appropriate/Desired Natural Resources and Recreation Conditions on Marin's Open Space Preserves

Information Stations

- MCOSD Preserve Maps
- MCOSD Rules and Regulations
- Vegetation Management Plan & Zoning
- Public Scoping Comments
  - Written
  - Oral
  - Submit by letter (March 4th)

Marin County Parks and Open Space

Follow Our Progress at:
www.marinopenspace.org

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