

## 4 GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS AND POLICY CONTEXT

### 4.1 Mission and Operation of the MCOSD

MCOSD is an independent legal entity and a special district operating pursuant to the *California Public Resources Code* to fulfill the following 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.*

A five-member board of directors oversees the operations of MCOSD. A seven-member Parks and Open Space Commission advises the MCOSD board of directors on policy matters related to acquisition, development, funding, management, and operation of MCOSD lands. A general manager oversees the day-to-day operations of MCOSD. MCOSD employs some 30 full-time employees and approximately 20 seasonal employees (seasonal numbers fluctuate annually). Of these employees, 4 work in natural resources, 13 work in maintenance and operations (including the volunteer coordinator), and 13 serve other functions within MCOSD.

#### GOVERNING AND GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS

This RTMP is consistent with governing plans and policies for MCOSD, including the following:

- California Public Resources Code (Section 5500 et. al.)
- California Environmental Quality Act
- National Environmental Protection Act
- Federal Endangered Species Act
- California Endangered Species Act
- Marin Countywide Plan (June 2007)
- Marin County Department of Parks and Open Space, Strategic Plan (June 2008)
- Marin County Open Space District Resource Management Framework (September 2008)
- Marin County Open Space District Policy Review Initiative (May 2005)
- Guidelines for Protecting Aquatic Habitat and Salmon Fisheries for County Road Maintenance (December 2004)

<b>Table 4-1 Summary of Governing Plans, Guidelines, and Policies Related to Road and Trail Management</b>	
<b>Marin Countywide Plan (2007)</b>	<b>Relevant Guiding Principles</b>
	1 A Preserved and Restored Natural Environment: Marin watersheds, natural habitats, wildlife corridors, and open space will be protected, restored, and enhanced.
	2 Collaboration and Partnerships: Marin public agencies, private organizations, and regional partners will reach across jurisdictional boundaries to collaboratively plan for and meet community needs.
	3 A Community Safe from Climate Change: Marin will be a leader in averting and adapting to all aspects of climate change.
	<b>Pertinent Goals and Policies</b>
	BIO-1 Enhanced Native Habitat and Biodiversity: Effectively manage and enhance native habitat, maintain viable native plant and animal populations, and provide for improved biodiversity throughout the County.
	BIO-1.6 Control Spread of Invasive Exotic Plants: Work with landowners, landscapers, the Marin County Open Space District, nurseries, and the multi-agency Weed Management Area to remove and prevent the spread of highly invasive and noxious weeds.
	BIO-2 Protection of Sensitive Biological Resource: Require identification of sensitive biological resources and commitment to adequate protection and mitigation, and monitor development trends and resource preservation efforts.
	BIO-4 Riparian Conservation: Protect and, where possible, restore the natural structure and function of riparian systems.
	BIO-2.5 Restrict Disturbance in Sensitive Habitat During Nesting Season: Limit construction and other sources of potential disturbance in sensitive riparian corridors, wetlands, and baylands to protect bird nesting activities.
	BIO-2.6 Identify Opportunities for Safe Wildlife Movement: Ensure that existing stream channels and riparian corridors continue to provide for wildlife movement at roadway crossings, preferable through the use of bridges, or through over-sized culverts, while maintaining or restoring a natural channel bottom.
	BIO-4.7 Protect Riparian Vegetation: Retain riparian vegetation for stabilization of streambanks and floodplains, moderating water temperatures, trapping and filtering sediments and other water pollutants, providing wildlife habitat and aesthetic reasons.
	BIO-4.15 Reduce Wet Weather Impacts: Ensure that development work adjacent to and potentially affecting SCAs is not done during the wet weather or when water is flowing through streams, except for emergency repairs, and that disturbed soils are stabilized and replanted, and areas where woody vegetation has been removed are replaced with suitable species before the beginning of the rainy season.
	TRL-2.2 Respect the Rights of Private Landowners: Design and manage trails to avoid trespass and trail construction impacts on adjacent private land.
	TRL-2.3 Ensure User Safety: Plan and maintain trails to protect the safety of trail users.
TRL-2.7 Ensure Sustainable Maintenance: Continue to ensure that trails are responsibly maintained.	
OS-1.1 Enhance Open Space Stewardship: Promote collaborative resource management among land management agencies. Monitor resource quality. Engage the public in the stewardship of open space resources.	

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<b>Marin County Strategic Plan (2001)</b>	The <i>Marin County Strategic Plan</i> contains the basic framework for the mission statement, goals, and strategies for Marin County Open Space.
<b>Marin County Department of Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan (2008)</b>	<b>Pertinent Goals</b>
	Goal-1 Protect and Restore Our Lands: Protect, restore, and preserve the natural systems of the lands held in trust for current and future generations.
	Goal-2 Grow and Link the County's Systems of Parks, Trails, and Protected Lands: Complete the county's system of parks, open space, and trails. Support the efforts of other agencies, organizations, and communities to fulfill their land preservation and system goals.
	Goal-3 Foster Discovery, Learning, and Stewardship: Engage the community by providing volunteer and educational experiences for people to discover, learn about, protect, and restore their parks and open spaces.
	Goal-5 Lead, Innovate, and Partner: Cultivate partnerships, explore new approaches, and adopt best practices and technologies.
	<b>Pertinent Fire Policies</b>
	F-1 MCOSD shall strive to reduce fire hazards on its lands in partnership with local fire agencies and communities, in recognition of the importance of wildfire prevention to every Marin County resident.
	F-2 MCOSD shall strive to plan and conduct fire fuel reduction activities in a manner that protects natural resources.
	F-3 MCOSD shall participate in countywide fire hazard reduction planning.
	F-4 MCOSD shall assess fire hazard conditions when acquiring new lands and in land management planning.
	F-5 MCOSD shall determine annual fire fuel reduction priorities on its lands, in consultation with Marin County's fire agencies.
	F-6 MCOSD shall consider the use of prescribed burns, grazing, and other fire hazard reduction practices to reduce fire hazard and restore or maintain native ecosystems.
	F-7 MCOSD shall encourage adjoining property owners to create defensible space surrounding homes and other improvements.
	F-8 MCOSD shall strive to resolve issues of defensible space in cooperation with Marin County fire agencies, planning authorities, and communities.
	<b>Pertinent Invasive Plant and Wildlife Policies</b>
	NN-1 MCOSD shall strive to reduce populations of nonnative species for the benefit of native habitats and species.
	NN-2 MCOSD should collaborate with public agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and landowners in regional and countywide planning to reduce populations of invasive species.
	NN-3 MCOSD shall inventory populations of, establish control priorities for, and develop control strategies for nonnative species.
	NN-4 MCOSD should minimize the unintentional introduction of nonnative species.
	NN-5 MCOSD should support and participate in research concerning the control of nonnative species.
NN-6 MCOSD shall accommodate remnants of nonnative species when they contribute to historic and cultural landscapes.	

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	<b>Pertinent Special-Status Species Policies</b>
SS-1	MCOSD shall protect and enhance the habitats of indigenous plants and animals. Those whose survival is threatened, endangered, or tenuous, or whose regional presence is rare, shall be given special protection. Such plants and animals shall be referenced in the following policies as special- status species.
SS-2	MCOSD should partner with public agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and landowners in regional and countywide efforts to inventory special-status species and to develop regional habitat conservation plans that protect special-status species, wildlife corridors, ecosystems, and biodiversity.
SS-3	MCOSD shall develop strategies to protect special-status species and their habitats, including strategies to resolve conflicts between public use of District lands and the protection of special- status species and their habitats.
	<b>Pertinent Public Outreach Policies</b>
PO-1	MCOSD shall conduct public outreach to inform Marin County residents and open space visitors of its mission, lands, resources, and programs; to enhance visitor appreciation and the educational value of open space; to encourage compliance with the Open Space District Code; and to promote good relations.
PO-2	MCOSD shall encourage public participation in its decision-making processes and, specifically, encourage the participation of neighborhoods and communities in discussions of issues affecting their interests.
PO-3	MCOSD shall direct its public outreach primarily to Marin County residents.
PO-4	MCOSD shall accommodate non-English speaking visitors by providing outreach in multiple languages.