

Robert Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve Land Use Plan Amendment April 6, 2016 Community Meeting



A well-attended meeting on April 6, 2016 provided the first opportunity for the community to provide input into the development of the Robert Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve land Use Plan Amendment (LUPA).

The meeting began with staff providing a brief overview of the 1,299-acre study area and the land use planning process, as well as a summary of prior planning efforts associated with the formation and development of Sibley Preserve.



A copy of the PowerPoint presentation that was presented at the meeting can be found online here on the East Bay Regional Park District website: [Robert Sibley LUPA](#)

Following the presentation attendees offered suggestions for improving safety, enhancing, documenting, and monitoring resources, and providing future recreation and interpretive facilities and programs at five poster stations. A summary of this community input is provided in this meeting summary and will be taken into consideration as the Land Use Plan Amendment is developed. Participants also had an opportunity to ask questions about the existing policies, plans and programs. Responses to these inquiries are also included in this summary. Finally, attendees offered a number of ways to expand community outreach and involvement in this planning process. The District will be following up with these community members as part of the planning process.



Community Ideas & Recommendations

ACCESS

- Provide bicycle safety measures e.g., signage, education
- Consider use of shuttle
- Add speed limit signs
- Increase off-road parking
- Close parking area at night
- Provide call box
- Provide for fire/truck turnaround when Preserve gates are locked
- Provide equestrian parking at southern terminus of Wilder Rd.
- Include horse trailer turn-around in staging area designs

WAYFINDING & INTERPRETATION

- Provide information in multiple languages
- Offer night walks
- Preserve and expand on the rich cultural history of the area
- Develop an education partnership with Canyon school
- Consider incorporating train stop shelter/sign located near Canyon Post Office into the Preserve design

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

- Retain grazing program – similar to program Briones Park
- Address the invasive grass in the Indian Valley area
- Get rid of wild turkeys
- Collaborate with Canyon on fuel reduction (expand area)
- Fuels management programs should be sensitive to natives



Community Ideas & Recommendations



RECREATION AMENITIES

- Maintain the quiet and peaceful quality of this treasure
- Provide picnic sites
- Provide backpack sites
- Allow equestrian access to barn
- East Bay Hills Ride-A-Camp in McCosker - Horse camping would be a big draw -Small-party camping opportunity
- Provide examples of camp group sites that would be similar to what is possible here
- Limit groups and activities so the community isn't impacted
- Prefer smaller size and type of campsites at McCosker - Don't need a shelter
- Do not provide camping
- Prefer conversion of Chabot Shooting range to camping over McCosker site

TRAIL DESIGN & USE

- Provide trail access to Sibley ridgeline
- Include a smaller-width trail alongside the creek restoration project
- Provide separate trails
- Post and enforce yield rules
- Provide hiker-only, single-track trails
- Facilitate long-distance and cross-country running
- Limit the number dog walkers
- Require a license for bringing dogs to parks
- Continue to allow dog walking providing more education on etiquette & picking up poop
- Retain current regulations allowing off-leash dogs in most back country areas
- Allow off-leash dog walking with rules similar to Sibley and Redwood parks
- Allow equestrian camping at the existing Sibley backpack campsite
- Provide horse water troughs
- Add tie rails for horses
- Do not include trail access through Indian Valley area

SAFETY

- Minimize fire risk at group camp by not allowing open campfires at McCosker
- Provide on-line incident reporting – Police, Fire, Operations
- Keep a fire engine on the property
- Retain Park Security Residence
- Incorporate water storage tanks on site
- Helicopter dip out of reservoir
- Address safety on multi-use trails

COMMUNITY OUTREACH & COLLABORATION

- Community partnerships are important
- Collaborate w/Canyon on access improvements
- Collaborate with Canyon on trail monitoring
- Work with local school (Canyon ESD)
- Collaborate with local community for patrol, volunteers, use planning
- Work with Laurel District and Fruitvale community groups and schools to explore ways to bring families (especially immigrant populations) to the woods
- Provide opportunities to participate in restoration work
- Request for Canyon community meeting
- Engage an Interpreter/Translator for meetings and events
- Include equestrians when developing site designs

RELATIONSHIP TO NEIGHBORING COMMUNITIES

- Maintain and do not threaten the character and privacy of the Canyon Community
- Isolation part of identity of Canyon



Community Questions & Concerns



How will the size of the campsite be determined? And what infrastructure and amenities will be provided?

Response

The size and type of amenities at the McCosker site will be constrained by the available land area; approximately 8.5 acres of relative flat land. Amenities and infrastructure will be tied to the type of recreation facilities incorporated into the site. Based on initial community input, the highest interest is for trail use, picnicking, backpack and group campsites and interpretive and outdoor education linked to the history and natural site resources. At a minimum, visitor amenities to accommodate these uses would include parking, restrooms and potable water, including water for dogs and horses. Infrastructure including a water source, litter, utility and sewage treatment or pumping to support these uses will be worked out through the design process.

Will the Land Use Plan Amendment incorporate off-site features such as the old railroad tunnel or the Sacramento Northern railway right-of-way?

Response

The Land Use Plan Amendment will: 1) evaluate East Bay Regional Park District resources and facilities; 2) document agreements and restrictions related to park use including the Wilder development agreement, East Bay Municipal Water District agreements and easements that run through the property; 3) provide recommendations for managing Park District resources; and 4) identify future recreation uses and service facilities on District parklands. The District cannot plan for, or include, other properties unless there is an agreement in place with that property owner.

What considerations have been made regarding access and parking? For example how was the size of the Phase I parking area determined? What type of signage will be used to identify the site? What if parking demand exceeds capacity? Will parking be allowed on Pinehurst Rd. What security measures will be put in place?

Response

Phase I parking was determined based on the existing area available for parking, approximately 10 spaces. Park District entry signs will be installed to identify park entry points. Standard Park District security measures include security cameras, locking gates, on-site park security residents, and park patrols. Additional parking to support proposed recreation facilities, along with emergency ingress and egress, and potential bike and vehicle traffic impacts on access roads will be addressed in a traffic study that will be prepared as part of the planning process.

What is the nature of the stream restoration project?

Response

The stream restoration project will daylight a historic creek channel and remove approximately 2,000 linear feet of a failing culvert system. The project will likely require the removal of some trees. A planting plan incorporating of a mix of native riparian understory and canopy plants and erosion control measures will be determined through the planning and permitting process.

What is the vegetation management program for the park?

Response

The District employs a combination of tools to manage vegetation at the park including seasonal grazing and integrated management programs to address harmful invasive weeds. Vegetation management includes volunteer invasive weed work and restoration projects.

What fire and public safety programs will serve these land acquisitions?

Response

The District employs full-time police officers, dispatch and fire responders that currently cover these properties. In addition, the District has two helicopters outfitted for law enforcement, medical, and fire response staffed seven days a week. The District does not anticipate changing helicopter routes over Canyon. The District works cooperatively with Moraga Orinda Fire Department and CAL Fire. All three agencies respond to wildland fires. Both the Park District and MOFD respond to medical or other emergencies. District Ordinance 38 would apply throughout Robert Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve, including provisions pertaining to alcohol and tobacco use.



Community Questions & Concerns



Why append the Western Hills Open Space and McCosker to Sibley vs. Huckleberry?

Response

This was part of the agreement for the land transfer enabling the Wilder residential development to proceed. Specifically, the land donation and establishment of endowments and a zone of benefit for maintenance of the open space was to mitigate for visual and other impacts to Sibley resulting from the Wilder development. Thus, the subject open space and developed trails were to become a part of Sibley Preserve.

Why have separate CEQA analyses been prepared for these properties and how will potential future impacts be assessed?

Response

Separate CEQA analyses have been prepared for the properties that make up Robert Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve because the Preserve has been acquired over an extended period of time extending back to 1936 which predates CEQA. Separate CEQA and permitting was completed for the Wilder property as part of that residential development process. Donation of the Western Hills Open Space and McCosker parcels to the Park District was one of the mitigations enabling the Wilder residential development to proceed. Future CEQA analysis will be required for any new improvements not covered by existing CEQA documents. This analysis will serve to: inform decision-makers and the public of potential environmental effects; identify ways to avoid or significantly reduce effects; and prevent significant, avoidable damage through project alternatives or mitigation measures.

How was the acquisition funded and how will the improvements and future maintenance be funded?

Response

The Western Hills Open Space and McCosker parcels are being donated to the Park District as mitigations enabling the Wilder residential development. Future recreation development and restoration work will be funded largely through grant funds. Maintenance will be funded through endowments and a zone of benefit set up as part of the land transfer.

STAYING INVOLVED & CONNECTED

There are several easy ways for you to receive information and participate in the Sibley Preserve LUPA process and other District activities:

- Request to be placed on the Sibley Preserve LUPA e-mail mailing list
- Visit the District website at the following link: <http://www.ebparks.org>
- Attend public planning open houses & presentations:
- Volunteer - Information about our volunteer program can be accessed at the following link: <http://www.ebparks.org>

For more information, please contact Julie Bondurant at (510) 544-2323 or jbondurant@ebparks.org

