

Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District

# Master Plan 2012 Update



**DRAFT APRIL 9, 2012**

## I. Introduction

The first Master Plan for the Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District (“District”) was adopted by the Board of Directors in 2009. This Master Plan was intended to be updated every three years with a current discussion of District activities and administration. The purpose was to ensure the Master Plan retains its usefulness as a ‘living’ strategic document. This Master Plan Update; 2012 is the first such update to the Master Plan.

Since adoption of the Master Plan, the District has made significant progress on many of the 61 projects identified in that Plan. This progress, and next steps for each project, is documented in Section II of this report.

Section III prioritizes the project list. As a result of actions taken since formation of the District, the District has at this point committed to owning and/or managing nten open space parks and regional trails, including:

**Napa River and Bay Trail** (American Canyon to City of Napa)—completion of trail and ongoing management

**Napa River Ecological Reserve**—continued management of public access and ecological restoration/environmental education

**Oat Hill Mine Trail**—continued management of public access, and potential northern extension

**Berryessa Vista Wilderness Park**—trail construction and management of public access

**Berryessa Peak Trail**—trail construction and management of public access

**Moore Creek Park**—ownership and environmental restoration for Moore Creek Unit, and construction of trails and management of public use for both the Moore Creek and Lake Hennessey Units

**Camp Berryessa**—construction and management of environmental education camp and associated trails

**Skyline Park**—probable management and possible ownership of this ‘flagship’ park in partnership with the Skyline Park Citizen’s Association

**Spanish Valley, Crystal Flats and Stone Corral**—ownership, environmental restoration, construction and management of trails and campgrounds

**Bothe-Napa Valley State Park**—repair and operation of this established State Park, and adjacent Bale Grist Mill State Historic Park, in partnership with the Napa Valley State Parks Association

Section IV discusses long-term financial planning. Since its formation the District has been financially supported by the County of Napa with grant funds derived from the County’s Special Projects Fund. These County funds have leveraged another \$14,387,000 in non-County of Napa grants and gifts, for a ratio of Non-County to County funding of 4.9 to one.

The District's past rate of success in obtaining outside grant funding is unlikely to continue. State and federal grant funding appears now to be drying up and private foundation grants have become much more competitive.

A more fundamental challenge is that funding from the County of Napa is not guaranteed. When voters approved an increase in the Transient Occupancy Tax ("TOT") in 2004, ballot measure campaign arguments stated the revenues would be used for parks and open space protection as well as visitor services and other special projects. But, how these TOT generated funds are actually used is a discretionary decision of the Board of Supervisors. Although the current Board of Supervisors have consistently shown strong support for the District overall, it is important for the stability and growth of the District that it augments these County allocations of TOT funds by obtaining its own dedicated funding.

Section IV discusses potential longer term funding options, and some factors to consider as a preferred option is selected by the District in coordination with the County and other partners. Section IV also presents four basic funding scenarios, and the general level of service which the District can expect to deliver at each funding level.

## II. Status of District Projects and Next Steps

The District Master Plan adopted in 2009 contained four major goals and 61 projects for implementing those goals. The Plan noted that the list of projects was intended to demonstrate the full range of potential District activities, and that the list of projects would change as some projects are completed, some are determined to be infeasible or of lower priority, and new opportunities and challenges present themselves.

Provided below is the current status of District projects, as well as next steps for each project.

### **Goal A. Provide opportunities for outdoor recreation through the development of a system of parks, trails, water resources, open space and related facilities**

#### **A.1 Oat Hill Mine Trail Improvements**

At the request of the District, in 2007 the Napa County Board of Supervisors exercised its retained easement rights to the Oat Hill Mine Road between Calistoga and Aetna Springs. Volunteers installed information kiosks and directional signs and implemented extensive erosion control measures, and the trail opened in 2008. Litigation filed by one of the owners of private property adjacent to the trail delayed completion of improvements at the Calistoga trailhead. This litigation was resolved in the County's favor in 2011. District volunteers maintain the trail and monitor public use.



Next Steps: The remaining improvements to the Calistoga trailhead are scheduled for 2012-13. These include erosion control work and aesthetic improvements.

#### **A.2 Milliken Creek Trails and Picnic Area Development**

With grant assistance from the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council, the District completed a feasibility study for trails within and through the City of Napa's Milliken Reservoir watershed. Subsequent negotiations between City and District staff resulted in conceptual agreement that the District would first work on opening trails on the north side of Lake Hennessey, since this area poses fewer operational challenges and water quality issues.

Next Steps: Give further consideration to the proposed trail network in the Milliken Creek watershed, after the District is successfully managing public access on the north side of Lake Hennessey.

#### **A.3 Camp Berryessa Redevelopment**

The District in 2010 completed a feasibility study for the redevelopment of an environmental education camp at Lake Berryessa, and also obtained \$1.55 million in grant funding to construct the first phase of the camp. In 2011 the District completed NEPA and CEQA reviews, executed a long-term land use agreement with Reclamation, and began preparing construction plans and specifications.

Next Steps: Final designs and specifications are scheduled for completion by mid-2012, with construction completed by the fall of 2013. Phase I include basic camp facilities but do not include the central dining area or special recreational enhancements.

Seek funding for subsequent phases.



#### A.5 Napa River and Bay Trail Phase I Development

The conceptual plan for a pathway along the Napa River connecting American Canyon with Napa was completed in 2006. The district obtained a \$1,013,000 grant to construct Phase I between American Canyon and Green Island Road as well as the loop around the former landfill. Land use agreements were negotiated with the Department of Fish & Game (“DFG”), the Napa-Vallejo Waste Management Authority and the City of American Canyon. The City of American Canyon completed its portion of Phase I (a trail from the Wetlands Edge Staging Area to the banks of the Napa River) in 2010. The District completed construction of the rest of Phase I (the trail looping around the closed American Canyon landfill, and the trail north to Green Island Road following the former salt plant ponds) in December 2011 and DFG.

Next Steps: On-going maintenance and operation of the trails in partnership with the City of American Canyon.

#### A.6 Napa River and Bay Trail Phase II Development

Phase II includes three segments: Between Kennedy Park and Soscol Ferry Road, through the Napa Sanitation District property (“NSD”), and between Fagan Marsh and Green Island Road. For the northern section, the District has obtained all right-of-way, permits and may have secured the funding to construct all but the portion owned by the Napa Pipe investors. The connection through the Napa Pipe property is expected to be a part of whatever development is eventually approved for the site, but will require a specific connection over to Kennedy Park. In the southern section, the District is in the process of obtaining permission to cross a railroad track, and is working with DFG and the Napa County Airport to complete environmental reviews for finishing construction of the runway safety area and the perimeter levee trail. In the central section, the District has completed initial biological surveys and discussed options with the Napa Sanitation District.



Next Steps: Construct the northern trail segment between Napa Pipe and Soscol Ferry Road as soon as funding is available.

Complete environmental review for the runway safety area and perimeter levee trail in 2012, and construct levee and trail by 2014 if funding can be obtained.

Seek approval for crossing of SMART railroad track in 2012.

Seek agreement with NSD on alignment through the NSD plant property in 2012, and complete environmental review in 2013 if funding can be obtained.

#### **A.7 Lake Hennessey North Shore Trail Development**

District and City of Napa staff have developed a plan for the District to construct and operate over 6 miles of trails in the 900 acres of City-owned upland on the north side of Lake Hennessey. Environmental review for this plan was completed in 2010 as part of the Moore Creek Park project.

Next Steps: Finalize agreement with City of Napa in 2012.  
Construct new trails in 2012 and 2013, and open area to public in 2014.

#### **A.8 Napa River Ecological Reserve Public Access Improvements**

In 2007 the District took over what had previously been a County responsibility to manage the Napa River Ecological Reserve. Since then the District has obtained \$110,000 in grants to fund improvements and restore native habitats. Public access improvements within the scope of the District's management agreement with DFG are complete; these include paving the parking area, installing traffic control boulders, removing dilapidated kiosk and installing a new information kiosk, and surfacing the pathway to the river with decomposed granite. The District is in a third year of an extensive program to control invasive species of weeds in the entryway meadow and replanting with native plant species. The District has come up with a concept for a seasonal bridge to provide better access across the river to the main reserve forest and meadow; this concept is now under review. Overall the District has dramatically improved maintenance of the reserve, partnering with a non-profit organization to perform weekly cleanups in addition to upgraded contracts for portable toilet and trash pickup services.



Next Steps: Seek approval from DFG for a seasonal bridge, and implement in 2012 if approved.

#### **A.9 Newell Preserve Access Development**

When the City of American Canyon drilled a new water well for use by campers and for off-stream cattle troughs the District assisted with funding. Drilling efforts came up dry. Connection to the municipal water system will be the next option. This option and open public access to Newell Preserve is largely dependent on the completion of land use plans with dedicated easements for the area between the Preserve and American Canyon's city center development. It is possible however to hike in from the Lynch Canyon Park on the Solano County side when Newell Preserve is open to the public.

Next Steps: No further District actions are proposed at this time; the District is available to assist the City in the development and management of the preserve should that assistance be requested.

#### A.10 Lake Berryessa Trail Development

The District is generally interested in seeing the Lake Berryessa Trail completed, and specifically those trail segments which will serve for access to Berryessa Vista Wilderness Park as well as Camp Berryessa. The non-profit organization Berryessa Trails and Conservation has completed route-finding and basic designs for most of the Lake Berryessa Trail. Reclamation in mid-2011 decided to take a more active role in planning the Lake Berryessa Trail, and has undertaken a multi-year planning and environmental review process.

**Next Steps:** Develop the short sections of the Lake Berryessa Trail within the area covered by the Camp Berryessa Use Agreement between the District and Reclamation, in 2013.

Continue to encourage Reclamation to complete its planning process, with a particular District priority being the section of the Lake Berryessa Trail which will provide overland access to the District's Berryessa Vista property.

#### A.11 Berryessa Peak and Blue Ridge Public Access Development

A one-half mile long trail easement was donated to the District in 2009, making possible a hiking trail from the Knoxville-Berryessa Road to the top of Berryessa Peak using a combination of old ranch roads and new trail segments. This rugged trail climbs over 3,500 feet and offers dramatic 360 degree views. The District completed CEQA review of the trail segment on the donated easement section of the trail in 2010, and since then volunteers have constructed the trail on the easement. The Bureau of Land Management has completed environmental review for the trail sections on federal land, and volunteers are continuing to construct the trail.



**Next Steps:** Complete brushing to reveal final alignment, during 2012.

Complete trail construction and signage using volunteers, by 2013.

#### A.12 Berryessa Vista Wilderness Park Development

Since acquisition of this 224 acre property from the Land Trust of Napa County the District has obtained legal access rights across adjoining Bureau of Reclamation property, prepared a property resources inventory and obtained a Use permit for public recreational use. Development of rustic facilities at Berryessa Vista Wilderness Park, to serve overnight backcountry camping, is proposed after overland trail access to the park is established.

**Next Steps:** Encourage Reclamation to complete planning for the Lake Berryessa Trail between Steel Canyon Road and the Knoxville-Berryessa Road. Make park improvements after this section of trail is constructed.

#### A.13 **Pope and Putah Creeks Trail Development**

Development of a network of trails connecting existing Bureau of Land Management properties in the north of Pope creek and west of Putah creek is identified as an important goal, but little progress was possible until the donation of the 2,500 acre Spanish Valley property to the District in December 2010. This dramatically improved connectivity between the several thousand acres of scatter tracts owned by the Bureau of Land Management in this vicinity, and created the potential for many tens of miles of hiking, mountain biking and equestrian trails.

Next Steps: Develop plans for a comprehensive trail network connecting the District's Spanish Valley property with surrounding federal lands, during 2012, and obtain Use Permit for these trails in 2013.

#### A.14 **Skyline Park Improvements Phase II**

The Skyline Park Citizens Association in 2008 obtained permission from Napa County and the State of California to construct a covered arena at the park, and to install a second greenhouse in the native plant growing area. Since then, the California Native Plant Society of Napa has deferred plans for the second greenhouse, and funding constraints have slowed the Skyline Riders Association's construction of the covered.

Next Steps: No further District action is needed at this time.

#### A.15 **Camp Berryessa to Knoxville Recreation Area Trail Development**

Construction of a public trail between Camp Berryessa and the Knoxville Recreation Area requires the public acquisition of either fee title ownership or trail easements across several private parcels of land.

Next Steps: Continue to look for opportunities to obtain needed connections between existing public lands.

#### A.16 **Napa Crest Trail Planning**

District staff has completed alignment evaluations for approximately two-thirds of the extent of the proposed Napa Crest Trail. With the exception of one 4,000 foot stretch, the rights of way and physical trail are now in place for the section of the Napa Crest Trail between Lake Hennessey and Mount St. Helena, a distance of 25 miles. Planning is complete for the section of the trail near Milliken Reservoir. The District together with the Solano Land Trust is working to obtain surplus property from the City of Vallejo east and north of Skyline Park which will result in several more miles of the Napa Crest Trail.

Next Steps: Continue to look for opportunities to obtain needed connections between existing public lands along the proposed Napa Crest Trail alignment.

Encourage the Land Trust of Napa County to open for public use the Napa Crest Trail through their Wild Lake and Duff properties.

#### A.17 **Napa River Access Planning**

The District in partnership with the City of American Canyon has completed two river access points as part of the construction of the San Francisco Bay Trail west of American Canyon. Another river access trail starting at the western end of Soscol Ferry Road is scheduled for construction as soon as funding is secured. In 2011 the City of Napa completed Trancas Park, providing river access including hand boat launching at the point where the river transitions from tidal to freshwater flows.



Next Steps: Continue to seek opportunities for providing more public access to the Napa River north of the City of Napa.

#### **A.18 San Francisco Bay Trail Planning in Napa County**

The Napa River and Bay Trail projects covered by projects A.5 and A.6 will complete the San Francisco Bay Trail ("Bay Trail") within Napa County on the east side of the Napa River, with the exception of a short gap along the southern end of the City of American Canyon, and on the Napa Pipe property. West of the Napa River, the District worked with the Bay Trail project to adopt an improved trail alignment. Also west of the Napa River safety improvements are still needed for the section of the Bay Trail that crosses under Highway 29 on Imola Avenue. South and west of the City of Napa the alignment consists of both Class I and Class II sections. Napa County has over the past several years been completing and improving these sections.

Next Steps: Support Napa County and City of Napa efforts to complete the Bay Trail west of the Napa River.

Continue to work on the Napa River and Bay Trail Phase II segments.

Continue advocating for inclusion of a Class I trail in whatever development is approved for the Napa Pipe property with a reliable crossing into Kennedy Park.

#### **A.19 Bay Area Ridge Trail Planning in Napa County**

In conjunction with Project A. 16 (Napa Crest Trail) the District has proposed a revised alignment for the Bay Area Ridge Trail that (a) serves all of the Napa Valley not just the southern half, (b) is longer but easier to build, and (c) would connect to and utilize more than 25 miles of trails on existing public and land trust properties.

Next Steps: Complete the process in 2012 of requesting the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council to revise the proposed alignment of the trail in Napa County.

Continue to monitor the proposed trail alignment for opportunities to obtain needed trail easements or fee title ownerships.

#### **A.20 Backcountry Camping Facilities in the Palisades Area**

Possibilities for backcountry camping have been identified by the District for several locations within the Palisades. Development of these primitive sites is dependent on progress on one or more other projects (Oat Hill Mine Trail North, closure of a public access gap between Moore Creek and Las Posadas, Land Trust of Napa County decisions regarding their Wild Lake and Duff properties, and local management of State Park lands)

Next Steps: No action required until progress is made on related projects.

#### **A.21 River to Ridge Trail Encroachment Resolution**

Continued passage along the length this trail was in jeopardy because a short section encroached onto private property and could not be relocated due to physical constraints. The District in 2010 completed a lot line adjustment between the State of California and Syar Industries that eliminated the encroachment of the trail onto Syar property.

Next Steps: No further action is required unless the State decides it wishes to revise the recorded trail easement to reflect the actual alignment of the trail on the ground.

#### A.22 **Moore Creek Trails, Picnic Area and Camping Facilities Development**

Since making acquisition in December 2008 the District has completed wildlife and botanical surveys of the property as well as all environmental reviews. The property lines have been surveyed, Meanwhile new wells were dug, repairs were made on the two houses, truckloads of trash were hauled away, plans have been drawn up for an upgraded septic system, many drainage and erosion problems have been corrected, the entry and access road repaired and repaved and significant progress has been made controlling invasive French broom.. A Use Permit has been obtained for outdoor recreational use; as part of that process, the District deferred until a later date any decision on whether to develop tent cabins. The focus for now and the next several years will be on completing proposed trails within the park. The one mile Vista Trail was completed in 2011, as was a short bypass trail to eliminate existing road erosion problems, and the short connector trail from the parking area to the City of Napa's Lake Hennessey property. The Moore Creek property has benefited significantly from volunteer labor; monthly weekend work parties attended by between 10 to 40 people have been ongoing for the past three years.

Next Steps: Open Moore Creek Park to the public in 2012, after completion of the trailhead composting toilet facility and surfacing of the parking area.

Complete planning for Madrone and Canyon Trails in 2012.

Construct the Chiles Creek Overlook Trail in 2012, and the Valentine Trail in 2013.

#### A.23 **Napa River Water Trail Development**

Plans for a Napa River Water Trail advanced by Friends of the Napa River and others were in 2010 expanded by the adoption by the Association of Bay Area Governments and the State Coastal Conservancy of a plan for the San Francisco Bay Water Trail. Projects to implement these plans so far are within the responsibility of the City of Napa and the California Department of Fish and Game.

Next Steps: Monitor and support the planning process. No action by the District is required at this time.

#### A.24 **Napa Valley Greenway / Vine Trail Development**

The non-profit Napa Valley Vine Trail Coalition was formed in 2008 to take the lead in advocating for the Napa Valley Vine Trail. The District has entered into a cooperative agreement with the Coalition to act as fiscal agent for grants, and to construct and operate trail segments where this will be helpful.

Next Steps: Complete the section of Napa River and Bay Trail between Soscol Ferry Road and Napa Pipe if funding is secured.

Now that the District has taken over management of Bothe-Napa Valley State Park, plan for and if approved construct the Vine Trail through the park in 2013.

#### A.25 **Henry Road/Milliken Peak Area Trail Development**

The District is considering several options for recreational trails in the Henry Road/Milliken Peak area, including partial closure of Henry Road to public motor vehicles, utilization of an old road easement connecting to Lovell Valley Road, and partnering with the De Rosa Preserve. The district has completed extensive records research and consulted with some of the landowners in the area as well as other interests.

Next Steps: Continue investigation of options for a trail in this area.

### A.26 Countywide Trail Network Planning

A conceptual countywide trail network was adopted as part of the Napa County General Plan Update in 2008, and further detailed in the District's Master Plan adopted in 2009. Since that time, the Vine Trail has gone from a general idea to a specific planned alignment. Also since that time, the donation of 3,400 acres to the District in the Lake Berryessa Estates area has dramatically altered the potential for regional trails in the Pope Creek-Putah Creek area. The District has been actively working to help modify the Bay Area Ridge Trail alignment so that it better serves as a spine trail within the Napa County network of trails.

**Next Steps:** Update the Countywide Trail Network design to include the Napa Valley Vine Trail and new trail links in the Spanish Valley and Crystal Flats area as well as reflect the most current Ridge trail alignment, in 2013.

### NEW A.27 Spanish Valley Park Development

The District received title to the 1,900 acre Spanish Valley property in December 2011 and took physical control of the property January 1, 2012. The property provides excellent habitat (grasslands, oak woodlands, ponds and streams, and gray pine chaparral) as well a opportunities for hiking, horseback riding, mountain bicycling, picnicking and camping.

**Next Steps:** Complete resource surveys and planning in 2012, and obtain Use Permit for selected recreational activities in 2013.



### NEW A.28 Crystal Flats Park Development

The District received title to the 670 acre Crystal Flats property in December 2011, and took physical control of the property January 1, 2012. The property includes 2 miles of Putah Creek, a mix of chaparral, grasslands and oak woodlands, and an unimproved private campground used by the Lake Berryessa Estates property owners. Crystal Flats has potential for public hiking, horseback riding, and mountain bicycling and camping. Since acquiring the property, the district has held several meetings with the Lake Berryessa Estates property owners with the objective of developing a mutually acceptable development and operations plan for the property.

**Next Steps:** Complete resource surveys and planning in 2012, including negotiating use, operation and management terms with the Lake Berryessa Estates Property Owners Association, and obtain Use Permit for selected recreational activities in 2013.

### NEW A.29 Stone Corral Park Development

The District received title to the 200 acre Stone Corral property in December 2011 and took physical control of the property January 1, 2012. The property includes nearly one mile of Putah Creek as well as dense oak woodlands, and private boat launch/picnic areas. Between the Stone Corral property and the District's Spanish Valley property is a parcel that was donated to the Lake Berryessa Estates Resort Improvement District to allow for expansion of their wastewater treatment facility; LBRID intends to transfer any surplus property to the District, thereby connecting these two areas. Access controls will be implemented in the process.

Next Steps: Complete resource surveys and planning in 2012, including negotiating use, operation and management terms with the Lake Berryessa Estates Property Owners Association.

Obtain Use Permit for any public uses which may be proposed, in 2013 or 2014.

### **NEW A.30 Bothe-Napa Valley State Park**

In mid-2011 the State decided to close 70 State Parks, including Bothe-Napa Valley State Park and the Bale Grist Mill State Historic Park. The District has partnered with the Napa Valley State Parks Association to take over management of these two parks and ensure their continued availability for the public. As Agreements with the State are nearly complete, and as a interim result the District has taken over management of Bothe-Napa Valley State Park starting April 1, 2012, for a period of five years (and probably longer).



Next Steps: Implement management of Bothe-Napa Valley State Park and the Bale Grist Mill State Historic Park as per agreements, in partnership with the Napa Valley State Parks Association.

### **NEW A.31 Oat Hill Mine Trail North and Mine Cleanup**

Napa County in 2008 exercised its rights to reopen the southern section of Oat Hill Mine Trail as a non-motorized recreational trail. Napa County still retains the right to reopen the Oat Hill Mine Trail north of Aetna Springs. The District has not requested to open this section of the road. One reason is that the road travels through the middle of three former Mercury mines. These mines need to be secured and cleaned up before public access can be safely allowed. The District has partnered with the non-profit organization Tuleyome on a grant funded cleanup of two of the mine sites and has agreed to be the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act for this project.

Next Steps: Continue to cooperate with the clean up of the Twin Peaks and Corona Mines; upon completion of the clean up, evaluate its effectiveness and decide whether to pursue opening the Oat Hill Mine Trail north.

## **Goal B. Preserve, restore and protect open space lands, natural resources and habitat areas**

### **B.1 Napa River Ecological Reserve Restoration**

The District is now in the third year of a long-term project to control invasive species in the entry meadow at the Napa River Ecological Reserve. The project was launched with a \$100,000 grant from the Coastal Conservancy in 2008. A second \$10,000 grant was obtained in 2011, which extends funding for the project through the end of 2012.

Next Steps: Continue to build a team of volunteers to work on controlling invasive plants at the reserve.

Seek additional grant funds dedicated to the restoration of native plants at the reserve.

## **B.2 Lake Berryessa Estates Open Space Preservation**

The District in 2009 submitted an application to the Bureau of Land Management for the no-fee transfer of two parcels totaling 480 acres. BLM is in the process of processing this application. District plans for the property included construction of two short segments of trail, with the possibility of a future trail continuing south along the western side of Putah Creek, and providing land for others to establish a volunteer fire department sub-station serving Lake Berryessa Estates. The District's acceptance of 3,400 acres of open space in this area in 2010 has significantly expanded potential for trails and other outdoor recreation.

Next Steps: Reevaluate plans for this property during 2012, in light of the expanded potential for recreation in the area

## **B.3 Berryessa Vista Acquisition**

The 224 acre Berryessa Vista acquisition was completed in 2008. Several adjacent undeveloped parcels of land are potentially available for purchase and would significantly improve this park by providing for more ecologically rational boundaries and easier overland access to the Knoxville-Berryessa Road.

Next Steps: Continue discussions with adjacent and nearby property owners regarding potential acquisition by the District.

## **B.4 Vallejo Lakes Area Acquisition**

The District is in continuing discussions with the Solano Land Trust and the City of Vallejo regarding the potential purchase by the District and the Trust of 1,100 or more acres of surplus City land (only a small area, of about 135 acres, is within Napa County). The City is in the process of obtaining title reports and appraisals for the affected land.

Next Steps: After City of Vallejo has completed title reports and appraisals, the District and the Solano Land Trust will determine whether to jointly pursue this acquisition.

## **B.5 South Napa Wetlands**

In lieu of having this 600 acre wetlands site transferred by the Napa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District ("Flood District") to the State, the District and the Flood District researched the option of having the property instead be transferred to the District. This would have retained local control and made it easier to utilize this area for environmental education and restoration projects. However, because of the extensive long-term and permanent responsibilities that the Flood District will continue to shoulder, the research ended up convincing the Flood District that it would be best for them to retain ownership.

Next Steps: No further work for acquiring this property is warranted at this time.

## **B.6 Linda Falls Conservation Easement**

The underlying conservation easement was transferred to the District when the Land trust of Napa County obtained fee title ownership of the Linda Falls property in 2008. This arrangement provides double protection for the property's conservation values.

Next Steps: No further action required at this time, other than annual monitoring of the easement to ensure the property is being properly stewarded.

### B.7 Palisades Cooperative Management Plan Development

The District participated in a process led by the Land Trust of Napa County to develop a cooperative management plan for the public properties in the Palisades area between Angwin and Mt. St. Helena. Now complete, the plan provides a framework for future cooperative efforts involving the land trust, California State Parks, the District, Bureau of Land Management and State Lands Commission. The closure of state parks announced subsequent to the completion of the report unfortunately means that California State Parks will not be able to be an active partner in the foreseeable future.

Next Steps: No further action warranted until the Land trust of Napa County determines how it wishes to proceed with its properties.

### B.8 Skyline Park Protection and Master Plan Development

The County adopted an updated Master Plan for Skyline Park in 2009, and at the same time revised the zoning to be consistent with the General Plan. Both actions strengthened legal protections for the park. The State of California approved legislation in 2010 authorizing sale of the property by the state if used for a public park.

Next Steps: Complete negotiations between the State, the County and the District for the acquisition of the property by the District to guarantee its perpetual park status, in 2012.

### B.9 Moore Creek Watershed Protection

The District's acquisition of the 673 acre De La Briandais property in 2008, combined with the State-owned Las Posadas Demonstration Forest and several conservation-easement protected properties, protected most of the Moore Creek watershed.

Next Steps: Monitor status of the remaining privately-owned, unprotected parcels in the Moore Creek watershed, and seek to protect these important watershed lands through conservation easements and fee title acquisitions as opportunities arise.



### B.10 Other High Priority Habitats Preservation

The District has participated with the Association of Bay Area Governments and others in developing Priority Conservation Areas within Napa County. These PCA's represent the areas of highest biological and/or recreational value within Napa County that are deserving of permanent protection through acquisition of fee title ownership and/or conservation easements.

Next Steps: Continue to monitor for opportunities to protect high priority conservation properties in Napa County

**NEW B.11 Moore Creek Environmental Restoration**

Small-scale logging approximately 50 years ago in the upper canyon of Moore Creek Park enabled invasive French Broom to establish itself in disturbed areas. French Broom crowds out many native plants, and greatly increases wildfire risk. District volunteers have made substantial progress in reducing the range of the Broom infestation.

Water quality in Moore Creek has for many decades been impacted by cattle grazing practices. The District is in the process of installing fencing which will exclude cattle from approximately two miles of Moore Creek.

Next Steps: Continue to focus on French Broom removal each winter and spring for another ten years or more.

Develop off-stream water and install fencing to protect water quality in the lower half-mile of Moore Creek.

**NEW B.12 Maple Springs Transfer**

The District applied for a no-fee transfer of Maple Springs from the Bureau of Land Management to the District. District ownership of the parcel would facilitate management of the Oat Hill Mine Trail as well as Maple Springs, since the trail provides the only access to and passes through the property.

Next Steps: Continue to encourage BLM to complete the transfer of Maple Springs.

**Goal C. Provide historical, cultural, environmental education programming opportunities****C.1 Camp Berryessa Outdoor Education Program Facility Development**

The concept for Camp Berryessa, at least initially, is that the District will construct and operate the camp facilities, but groups that use the camp will provide their own programming. As part of the District's role, the District intends to educational materials and instructions, including self-guided nature trails for identifying native plants and animals, and natural science and other K-12 subject curriculum linked to State standards.

Next Steps: Continue developing an advisory committee with experts from other public agencies and community organizations to develop educational materials for use at Camp Berryessa, during 2012 and 2013.

**C.2 Napa River Ecological Reserve Environmental Education Program Development**

During 2010 and 2011, the District sponsored field trips for scores of elementary, middle and high school students, including obtaining expert speakers and engaging the students in invasive weed removal.

Next Steps: Seek grant funding to continue the educational program at the Reserve.

Compile educational materials and presentations about the reserve into a database that can be used by teachers in the future.

### **C.3 Napa River to Ridge Trail Interpretive Path Development**

Approximately 1,000 feet of the River to Ridge Trail, immediately east of Soscol Avenue, runs between parallel chain link fences. To make this section of trail more inviting, life-size silhouettes of animals that one can see at Skyline Park are installed on the fencing.

Next Steps: Install natural history information about Skyline Park in the River to Ridge Trail kiosk, in 2012.

### **C.4 Rector Ridge Trail Interpretive Path Development**

When constructed, the Rector Ridge Trail offers great potential for interpreting the history and development of the Napa Valley.

Next Steps: No action needed until the District is able to obtain permission to construct the Rector Ridge Trail.

### **C.5 Napa River and Bay Trail Interpretive Path Development**

The District's grant to construct Phase I of the Napa River and Bay Trail included 8 interpretive stations, discussing topics ranging from wastewater treatment, solid waste landfills, salt production, wetlands restoration and native American use of the area. Volunteers helped set up the stations.

Next Steps: Completed in March 2012. No additional action other than maintenance required.

### **C.6 South Napa Wetlands Habitat Interpretive Facilities and Programming Development**

With the decision of the Napa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District to retain ownership of the South Napa Wetlands, development of interpretive facilities and programming at this location is less urgent than elsewhere. In addition, the best location for a waterfowl observation area would obtain its access from property owned by the City of Napa. Until the City completes its planning for this site, the District cannot proceed with the observation area.

Next Steps: No action needed until the City of Napa completes planning for its property in this area

### **C.7 Huichica Creek Wetlands Interpretive Path Development**

This project has been put on inactive status because of uncertainty about the legality of the access to the Huichica Creek Wetlands, which are managed by the California Department of Fish and Game. The issue of public access would need to be resolved before it would make sense to consider installing an interpretive path.

Next Steps: No further District action needed at this point.

### **C.8 Oat Hill Mine Trail Interpretive Path Development**

The District has on its web site provided copies of a self-guided geology tour as well as two articles on native plants.

Next Steps: Evaluate the potential to interpret the mercury mining history of the area when deciding whether to open the Oat Hill Mine Trail north of Aetna Springs.



## **C.9 Cedar Roughs Interpretive Materials Development**

Public access to the Cedar Roughs Wilderness is on property owned by the California Department of Fish and Game. Any interpretive materials therefore require the permission of the Department. So far, the Department has not been interested in having interpretive signs and panels installed at their Cedar Roughs properties.

Next Steps: No action required at this time.

### **Goal D. Provide for District management and partnerships**

#### **D.1 Develop and Implement a Multiyear Budget and Service Plan**

See separate discussion in this update regarding long-term funding, budgeting and service planning.

#### **D.2 Develop Public Information Program**

The District has set up a web page that provides news, meeting agendas and documents, reports, information about District parks and trails, and a method for volunteers to sign-up. District volunteers have on their own have also established a Facebook page for sharing volunteer photos and stories.

Next Steps: Upgrade the District web page to use current software and operate more effectively, in 2012.

#### **D.3 Consider Establishing Non-Profit Foundation**

An ad hoc subcommittee of the Board of Directors concluded in 2009 that it made sense to form a foundation focused on raising funds to help youth experience the outdoors, and the time to do it was in conjunction with the opening of Camp Berryessa.

More recently, the District has partnered with the Napa Valley State Parks Association to fundraise for Bothe-Napa Valley State Park and the Bale Grist Mill State Park Association. This partnership provides the District with the benefits of having a non-profit foundation without the need to set up a separate organizational structure.

Next Steps: Plan on establishing a non-profit foundation or an equivalent fundraising capacity in 2013 in conjunction with the opening of Camp Berryessa.

#### **D.4 Consider Forming District Advisory Committee**

Given the small size of the District and the direct involvement of staff and Board members with volunteers and others in the community, the Board of Directors has concluded a formal advisory committee is not needed.

Next Steps: No further action is required at this time. This topic should be revisited in 2014 after the District has several distinct parks and trails in operation.

#### **D.5 Establish Partnerships with Public Art, Historical & Cultural Interpretation Organizations**

The District in 2011 was awarded recognition by Napa County Landmarks for helping to preserve Napa County's historic landscapes. More recently, the District has formed a close working relationship with the Napa Valley State Parks Association, which has been the driving force behind the preservation, restoration and educational events at the Bale Grist Mill State Historic Park. More generally, the District in 2011 received a commendation from Napa County Landmarks for working to protect historic landscapes.

Next Steps: Seek creative partnerships that can result in public art being incorporated into the District's parks, when opportunities present themselves

#### **D.6 Develop Volunteer Participation**

Since its formation in 2007, the District has organized 11,000 hours of volunteer support for the district, valued at over \$225,000. Volunteers have worked on constructing trails, repairing facilities, installing gates and fences, removing old trash dumps, pulling invasive French Broom, planting native trees and shrubs, biological inventories, planning studies, boundary surveys, and much more. Local businesses and individuals have donated an additional \$60,000 in donated goods and services.

Next Steps: Continue to manage and expand the volunteer program, with the objective to increase the number of volunteer hours each year

#### **D.7 Prepare and Adopt District Purchasing and Contracting Policies and Procedures**

Contracting policies and procedures were adopted by the District Board of Directors in 2010.

Next Steps: No further action required, other than to monitor changes in State and Federal law and update District policies and procedures as appropriate.

Monitor changes in State and federal laws and update District policies and procedures as appropriate.

#### **D.8 Prepare and Adopt District Policies and Ordinances for Public Use of Facilities**

The District Master Plan calls for the development of District policies and ordinances for the use of public facilities when and as they are needed. To date, it has been sufficient for the District to post advisory policies, such as for the seasonal closure of the Oat Hill Mine Trail.

Next Steps: Evaluate the need and effectiveness of adopting District policies and ordinances for the use of District facilities as new parks and trails are opened and on-the-ground experience is gained.

#### **D.9 Adopt Policies and Develop Partnerships, Sponsorships and Donation Programs for Use and Promotion of District Facilities**

The District adopted a policy on acknowledging donations for the Oat Hill Mine Trail which apply to other parks and trails as well.

Next Steps: Develop specific policies and partnerships with the private and non-profit sectors for the operation of Bothe-Napa Valley State Park, in 2012.



#### **D.10 Consider Developing District Deputized Ranger Capacity**

Having a deputized ranger program requires extensive organization, training and expense, as well as added liability. The District has therefore decided to not pursue the establishment of a deputized ranger program as long as other approaches (education, monitoring, partnerships with various interest groups, and cooperation with the County Sheriff) remain effective.

**Next Steps:** Reevaluate the issue of the District setting up a deputized ranger program in 2013, after more experience has been gained at Moore Creek Park, the Napa River and Bay Trail, and Bothe-Napa Valley State Park.

#### **D.11 Prepare and Adopt Green Standards for Building and Operations**

The District is using the Moore Creek Park and Camp Berryessa projects as learning opportunities for developing and demonstrating various green building practices. The District worked with the County in 2010 to modify environmental health standards to allow composting toilets and gray water systems, and these systems will be installed at both parks—a first in Napa County. The Camp Berryessa project is further exploring a wide range of recycled and repurposed building materials. Energy and water conservation improvements are being implemented as well.

**Next Steps:** Upon completion of Phase I of Camp Berryessa, the District will compile what it has learned into Green Standards for Buildings and Operations.

#### **D.12 Develop and Implement Cooperative Strategies for Habitat Restoration**

The District has worked informally but closely with the Napa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District and the Resource Conservation District on habitat restoration projects at Moore Creek (providing tools and plants for riparian re-vegetation) and at the Napa River Ecological Reserve (providing expertise, field guides, and tools). The District has also shared tools with Berryessa Trails and Conservation and with the Land Trust of Napa County on several invasive species removal projects.

**Next Steps:** Continue to work cooperatively with other local agencies and organizations to restore critical habitats in Napa County.

#### **D.13 Update Countywide Inventory of Protected Open Space Lands**

The countywide inventory of protected open space lands was updated in 2009, 2010, and again in mid-2011.

**Next Steps:** The next update is planned for late-2012.

#### **D.14 Update District Master Plan**

The District's first Master Plan was adopted in January 2009. This plan called for periodic reviews and updates as needed to ensure the plan is current and useful for guiding the strategic direction of the District.

**Next Steps:** Adopt this update of the Master Plan in early 2012, and plan on the next update in 2015.

#### **D.15 Establish Partnerships with Land Conservation and Public Recreation Organizations and Agencies**

The District has adopted two formal partnership agreements, including (a) with the City of American Canyon for the joint development and management of the Napa River and Bay Trail Phase I, and (b) with the Vine Trail Coalition to assist as needed with construction and operation of sections of the Vine Trail. The District also actively participates in the Blue Ridge Berryessa Natural Area Partnership and the Bay Area Open Space Council, two regional non-profits that coordinate conservation, recreation and outdoor education efforts.

**Next Steps:** Finalize an MOU with the Land Trust of Napa County to more formally acknowledge our mutual and complementary roles.

Finalize a formal agreement between the District and the Napa Valley State Parks Association on respective roles with managing Bothe-Napa Valley State Park and the Bale Grist Mill State Historic Park.

#### **D.16 Prepare and Adopt Habitat Stewardship Guidelines**

The District Master Plan contains a list of principles for guiding District stewardship activities. Key among these is the concept of adaptive management. This approach to management recognizes that each location is different, and techniques that work in one location may not work as well in another location. This approach also recognizes that as a new District it will take time to develop the local experience necessary to develop useful guidelines.

**Next Steps:** Continue to research habitat stewardship needs and to gain experience addressing those needs, with the objective of developing a stewardship manual by 2013.

### III. Project Prioritization

The Master Plan adopted in January 2009 contained 61 projects, of which 30 were categorized as Tier One. A Tier One categorization meant that project would receive higher priority for limited staff time and funding.

Since the Master Plan was adopted, seven projects have been completed. The most significant of these were the acquisition of the Moore Creek and Berryessa Vista properties, and the completion of Phase One of the Napa River and Bay Trail.

Meanwhile, another seven new projects have been added. Three of these involve the three major open space areas—Spanish Valley, Crystal Flats and Stone Corral—donated to the District in 2010. Another project—District operation of Bothe-Napa Valley State Park—is in response to the State's decision to close 70 State Parks. The other three projects are follow-on projects to some of the completed projects.

The net result of these changes is that the Master Plan as updated still contains 61 projects. Of these, 32 are categorized as Tier One. Another 13 projects have been placed in the Inactive category. This designation is for projects that are worthy, but which cannot be pursued at this time because other things beyond the control of the District must happen first. As a result of the number of Tier Two projects has dropped from 31 in the original plan to 16 in the updated plan.

Despite the winnowing of the list of projects since the Master Plan was adopted, the Master Plan still includes many more projects than the District can realistically implement with current financial and staff resources. Even the more limited Tier One list is beyond the current capacity of the District.

Based on the principal that the District should finish, and properly maintain, the projects it has already started, District priorities going forward can be further narrowed and defined in terms of the facilities the District will provide the public. The ten geographic areas to which the District is committed include the following:

**Napa River and Bay Trail** (American Canyon to City of Napa)—construction of missing segments and operation of trail in partnership with City of American Canyon

**Napa River Ecological Reserve**—continued management of public access and ecological restoration/environmental education

**Oat Hill Mine Trail**—continued management of public access

**Berryessa Vista Wilderness Park**—trail construction and management of public access

**Berryessa Peak Trail**—trail construction and management of public access

**Moore Creek Park**—ownership and environmental restoration for Moore Creek Unit, and construction and management of trails for both the Moore Creek and Lake Hennessey Units

**Camp Berryessa**—construction and operation of environmental education camp and associated trails

**Skyline Park**—ownership and management of park in partnership with Skyline Park Citizen's Association

**Spanish Valley, Crystal Flats and Stone Corral**—ownership, environmental restoration, construction and management of trails and camping

**Bothe-Napa Valley State Park**—operation of this State Park, and adjacent Bale Grist Mill State Historic Park, in partnership with the Napa Valley State Parks Association

For most of the above parks and trails, the District has (or shortly will have) responsibilities for routine operations and management as well as plans for improvements. In allocating District financial and staffing resources as part of the annual budget process, resources stewardship and managing public access will have first priority; improvements will have second priority.

The single largest capital improvement within the above list is the completion of the Napa River and Bay Trail. The timing for completion of this trail will be heavily dependent on the availability and timing of state and federal grants. The second largest potential capital improvement is to construct Phase Two (a central dining facility) at Camp Berryessa; this project will only occur if outside grant funding can be obtained. There are also significant capital improvement needs for Bothe-Napa Valley State Park; the initial improvements require community fundraising, while the remainder of the improvements are dependent on sufficient revenues being generated by the park's operations.

Table Two shows estimated minimal annual expenditures and revenues associated with each of ten parks and trails to which the District has already committed. The Table also includes estimated long-term capital improvement needs for each park and trail.

Table Two shows that, assuming the County of Napa continues to fund the District at its current annual allocation level, the District will be able to generate an additional \$660,000 per year in revenues from operations. Through these combined sources the District will have the minimal financial resources to operate these nine parks and trails, but only have at most about \$125,000 annually left over to use as local match in seeking the nearly \$12 million in grants that will be needed to complete all proposed improvements. If the District were able to continue its past track record, it would take about a decade to raise the grant funding needed to complete these ten parks and trails. This is an overly optimistic projection, however, in that it is based on performance during a time when state and federal grants were more readily available than they are today. In addition, the District's past success with grant funding has been substantially better than is typical. Typically, one is doing well to be able to match local dollars with outside grants at a ratio of 1:1. If the District's future performance were similar to this norm, it would take 101 years for the \$125,000 in annual discretionary funds to leverage enough outside grants funds to cover the \$12 million in project completion costs.

In summary, with the District's current level of funding it should be able to develop, open and manage ten regional parks, trails and campgrounds throughout Napa County. However, full buildout of all of the improvements proposed for these ten locations is unlikely to be completed in the foreseeable future given current assured funding levels.

## IV. Long-Term Financial Planning

In 2006, when the County Board of Supervisors approved placing formation of the District on the ballot, the Board also committed to funding the District for some initial period of time, with the expectation that at the appropriate time the District would seek voter approval for a dedicated tax or fee based funding to further support basic District operations and special projects..

In 2007, the Board of Supervisors adopted a policy that allocated 60 percent of the Special Projects Fund to parks and open space purposes. By Board policy, this Fund derives its revenues from a 1.5 percent increase in the Transient Occupancy Tax ("TOT") approved by the voters in 2004.

Since its formation the District has been financially supported by the County of Napa with allocations of funds derived from the TOT based Special Projects Fund. Using \$2,925,317 of these allocations the District has successfully leveraged these funds into direct non-County grants totaling \$5,343,118 and \$14,387,407 in total non-County of Napa support (including direct and indirect grants, donated land values, value of donated goods and services).

On a direct cash value basis County support has been leveraged by the District for a ratio of 1. 8: 1. When all grants, donations, goods and services received by the District and its partners in District implemented projects is considered, County support has been leveraged out to a ratio of 4. 9: 1. This has certainly changed yet again due the current fund raising being conducted to help save historic assets at Bothe-Napa Valley State Park and the adjacent Bale Grist Mill.

In the five years since the District was formed, the prospects for the District obtaining the addition of its own direct permanent funding have both improved and worsened. On the one hand, the District has a positive reputation, has established a solid track record and is well on the way to having ten parks, trails or campgrounds open to the public. By 2014 when all ten sites will be either fully or partially complete, the public will be able to clearly see what they are getting for their money.

On the other hand, the deep and lingering economic troubles of the past three years, both locally and nationally, has dampened public support for any new taxes, and the collapse of the real estate market has especially dampened property owner support for new parcel taxes. The protracted crisis in the State budget is continuing to drag down the local economy and hinder recovery while shifting some service cost burdens to local agencies.

Excluding one-time grants or endowments, potential long-term funding sources for the District include:

- Expanded revenues from recreational use fee operations. This is the most reliable source of revenues, and within the discretion of the District, but it is limited by market realities and policy considerations.
- Continued County of Napa Special Projects Fund (TOT based) support. This is consistent with the intent of the TOT increase approved by County voters in 2004, but continued funding is not guaranteed (unless it were to be locked in through long-term contract or made permanent by two-thirds voter approval).
- New countywide parcel tax. The District is authorized by State law to place a parcel tax measure on the ballot; two-thirds voter approval is required for passage.

- New countywide sales tax. With the cooperation of the County a countywide sales tax measure could be placed on the ballot to fund the District; two-thirds voter approval is required.
- New special assessment on property: The District is authorized by State law to propose special property assessments; major vote of property owners required. But funds from special assessments cannot be used for general park and open space purposes, but only for purposes where there is a specific and clear benefit to a specific group of properties.

Napa County's current funding commitment to the District continues through 2014. During this time, the District needs to closely monitor rapidly changing economic and political circumstances and be ready to seek approval for addition of a permanent funding source for expanding District needs, if it appears feasible to do so.

It is beyond the scope of this Master Plan Update to adopt a specific funding strategy. A successful strategy must be formed in partnership with the County of Napa, other local jurisdictions and many community groups. However, it is possible at this time to identify some of the key factors to consider. These include:

- The November 2012 ballot will likely be crowded with other tax related proposals, such as to increase several versions to increase State taxes. This fact, plus continued economic malaise, is causing most public agencies to defer plans for placing tax proposals on the ballot until November 2014 or 2016. 2012 would be far too soon to realistically obtain a two thirds vote, even if the ballot were not crowded with other tax measures.
- A countywide ballot measure in Napa County costs approximately \$150,000 (these are the public costs, not any campaign related costs that supporters and opponents may incur). District affiliated resources simply are not identified at this time for the costs of such an effort.
- A two-thirds level of voter support is extremely hard to obtain, since between 25 and 30 percent of frequent voters in Napa County are predictably opposed to any tax regardless of purpose. Thus, to be successful, there cannot be any credible, organized and motivated opposition.
- A good lead-in time would be necessary (perhaps two years) for supporters to build the kind of campaign needed to obtain two thirds voter confidence, even with no competition on a ballot from another tax measure.
- Voter resistance to parcel taxes is typically stronger than it is to sales taxes. Some voters regard parcel taxes as more regressive than sales taxes, while other voters dislike taxes on property more than taxes on consumption. As a result, it is very difficult to get two-thirds voter approval for a parcel tax unless the dollar amount is exceedingly small (on the order of \$10 OR LESS per parcel per year). In recent years only school districts have had much success with passage of parcel taxes, and they require only a fifty five percent threshold for approval (not two thirds).
- A \$10 per year parcel tax in Napa County would generate less than \$450,00 per year. By comparison, every one eighth of a percent of a sales tax in Napa County would generate approximately \$2.8 million per year in current dollars.



- Obtaining voter approval for continuing an existing tax (which still would require its own new two thirds vote) is much easier than adding a whole new tax. The only existing tax in Napa County that has the potential to be continued, but with new or expanded purposes, is the original Measure A half-percent sales tax that helps funds the flood control project, and that is scheduled to expire in 2018. However, sunset of that funding source is currently being considered for repurpose as a way to either pay for streets and roads or perhaps even build a new county jail and public safety facility.
- It would be more difficult to obtain voter approval for a new tax to support the District if the revenues simply replaced what the County of Napa currently provides using the existing Transient Occupancy Tax ("TOT") . When the TOT was increased it was with the stated but informal understanding that it would be used for purposes such as parks and open space. To be successful at the ballot box, any proposal for a new tax would thus likely need to be coupled with a maintenance of commitment by the County Board of Supervisors related to continuing allocations of the existing TOT out of its dedicated Special Projects Fund for parks and open space purposes.
- To be compliant constitutionally with Proposition 218, as approved by State voters a special assessment would have to demonstrate clear benefit to the local property owners, and only to the extent that it benefits each specific property owner. Special assessments cannot be used for general park and open space purposes.

The continuation of existing funding and its enhancement for the District is a serious strategic policy determination which can only be initiated by the Board of Supervisors (for the intended TOT allocation) or the District Board of Directors (direct tax or assessment). Confirmation of such policy rests with voters.

To help inform the development of a long-term funding strategy for the District, three service scenarios are presented below: These scenarios describe the level of service that the District could provide at each of three different levels of local funding.

### **Scenario One: Status Quo**

The first scenario describes what the District can be expected to accomplish assuming a minimal level of local funding approximately equivalent to the level of funding the County currently provides. As discussed in the previous section, at this level of funding the District has the ability to manage, operate, and over time complete ten anticipated parks, trails and campground facilities. This will be a major achievement, one that the District can be proud of, and one that justifies the support and trust given by the County Board of Supervisors.

By way of comparison, when formation of the District was first being considered by the County of Napa, County staff estimated that for an annual County subsidy of about \$750,000 it would be possible for the County to establish and operate only two to three regional parks.

Although the District is doing exceedingly well compared to that initial projection, it is not realistic to expect the District to be able to continue its recent success in leveraging outside funds. State, federal and private foundation grant programs are running out of funds, and it is unclear when new funding will be forthcoming.

As a result, under Scenario One, full completion time for the ten projects is still *at least* several decades away. In addition, under this scenario the District will have very little ability to acquire and protect any

more important watersheds and natural habitats, undertake any new restoration projects, or fill in geographic and functional gaps in outdoor recreation infrastructure. It will not have the capacity to complete the Bay Area Ridge Trail through Napa County, nor the Napa Valley Crest Trail circling the Napa Valley. It will not be able to expand its youth outdoor education programs and full stewardship engagements beyond its current limited scope.

### **Scenario Two: Modest Expansion**

For discussion purposes, this scenario assumes the amount of locally generated funding approximately doubles from over \$600,000 to \$1.2 million annually (or roughly equivalent to a new \$13 annual parcel tax made to augment the existing County allocation to parks and open space from the Special Projects Fund). Under this assumption, the amount of discretionary money available for new projects, after administrative, maintenance and operational expenses are covered, would increase from about \$125,000 to about \$725,000.

This increased level of discretionary funding means the District would be able to fully complete ten parks, trails and campgrounds within about a decade. It would also enable the District to have at least some modest capacity to acquire key parcels when they become available. Having this capacity is critical if the District is to make progress on the Napa Valley Crest Trail, the Bay Area Ridge Trail, and other regional trail connections. This capacity is also necessary if the District is to successfully preserve some of the more important habitats and habitat connectivity.

Given land values in Napa County, the amount of land the District could acquire each year would be quite limited under Scenario Two. It would however at least provide seed money for attracting outside grants, and provide some hope that the District would be able to take advantage of opportunities when they arise.

### **Scenario Three: Full Stewardship**

A fundamental part of the District's mission is to protect and preserve important open spaces in Napa County, like key watersheds, prime wildlife habitat, wildlife corridors, areas with unique and diverse native species as well as areas suitable for recreation in natural settings.

Scenario One provides little chance that the District will be able to protect additional open space lands, unless they are donated, and even then the District's ability to manage additional lands would need to be carefully evaluated before taking on new properties. Under Scenario Two, the District would be able to respond to a few key land acquisition opportunities, but many others would be lost due to the District's lack of capacity.

Scenario Three assumes voters approve an annual local funding stream of \$3 million, which is approximately what would be generated by a one-eighth percent sales tax.

This level of funding would be sufficient to enable the District (a) to provide the highest level of stewardship for the lands and resources it manages, (b) to take advantage of most opportunities to acquire key parcels as they become available, and (c) to continue to expand outdoor recreational opportunities for the enjoyment of residents and tourists alike.

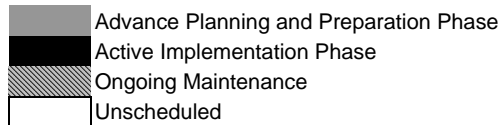
A growing body of studies nationwide show that proximity to well funded parks and trails adds considerable value to a community. Evidence points to increased property values, improved mental and physical health by exposure to nature and by outdoor recreation, and more local business patronage due to park activities and operations as well as retail purchases made locally by park employees and visitors

alike. For a destination like Napa County the addition of park sites may draw more visitors which could well translate into additional hotel room stays.

The District over the past six years has initiated and is well into the implementation of ten significant parks, trails and campgrounds. Now that this system is taking shape, it is time for the District to engage its partners in a discussion about what services the community wishes the District to provide going forward, and how best to fund those services.

**Table 1 Project Implementation Timeline**

The time frames shown here represent the earliest possible implementation dates, and assume projects prove to be feasible. Actual implementation will vary, generally with later implementation than shown, since most projects depend on approvals and actions by partners beyond the control of the District, as well as on funding which must first be obtained. Tier One projects are those which will receive priority consideration for limited funding and staffing. The meaning for the shading used in the charts is indicated below:



Project No. 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 Status

**Goal A. Provide opportunities for outdoor recreation through the development of a system of parks, trails, water resources, open space and related facilities**

Project No.	Project Name	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Status
A.1	Oat Hill Mine Trail Improvements		Active	Maintenance	Maintenance			Tier One
A.2	Milliken Creek Trails and Picnic Area Development		Active					Inactive
A.3	Camp Berryessa Redevelopment	Advance	Active		Maintenance	Maintenance		Tier One
A.4	Rector Ridge/Stag's Leap Ridge Trail Development		Active	Advance	Active	Maintenance		Tier Two
A.5	Napa River and Bay Trail Phase I Development	Active	Active					DONE
A.6	Napa River and Bay Trail Phase II Development	Advance	Active	Active	Active			Tier One
A.7	Lake Hennessey North Shore Trail Development	Advance	Advance	Active	Active	Maintenance		Tier One
A.8	Napa River Ecological Reserve Public Access Improvements	Active	Active	Maintenance	Maintenance			Tier One
A.9	Newell Preserve Access Development							Inactive
A.10	Lake Berryessa Trail Development			Advance	Active			Tier Two
A.11	Berryessa Peak and Blue Ridge Public Access Development	Active	Active	Maintenance	Maintenance	Maintenance		Tier One
A.12	Berryessa Vista Wilderness Park Development			Advance	Active			Tier Two
A.13	Pope and Putah Creeks Trail Development	Advance	Advance	Active	Maintenance	Maintenance		Tier Two
A.14	Skyline Park Improvements Phase II							Inactive
A.15	Camp Berryessa to Knoxville Recreation Area Trail Development							Inactive
A.16	Napa Crest Trail Planning	Advance						Tier One
A.17	Napa River Access Planning							Inactive
A.18	San Francisco Bay Trail Planning in Napa County	Advance		Advance				Tier One
A.19	Bay Area Ridge Trail Planning in Napa County	Advance						Tier One
A.20	Backcountry Camping Facilities in the Palisades Area							Inactive
A.21	River to Ridge Trail Encroachment Resolution							DONE
A.22	Moore Creek Trails, Picnic Area and Camping Facilities Development	Active	Active		Maintenance	Maintenance		Tier One
A.23	Napa River Water Trail Planning							Inactive
A.24	Napa Valley Greenway / Vine Trail Development	Advance	Active		Maintenance	Maintenance		Tier One
A.25	Henry Road/Milliken Peak Area Trail Development	Advance		Advance				Tier Two
A.26	Countywide Trail Network Planning	Advance						Tier Two
A.27	Spanish Valley Park Development	Advance						Tier One
A.28	Crystal Flats Park Development	Advance						Tier One
A.29	Stone Corral Park Development	Advance						Tier One
A.30	Bothe-Napa Valley State Park	Advance						Tier One
A.31	Oat Hill Mine Trail North and Mine Cleanup	Advance						Tier Two

Table 1 Project Implementation Timeline (page two)



DRAFT April 9, 2012

Table Two: Projected Expenditures and Revenues by Functional Unit

	annual expenditures		annual revenues	Long-term capital needs
	administration	field operations		
Napa River and Bay Trail	\$5,000	\$10,000	\$0	\$8,000,000
Napa River Ecological Reserve	\$5,000	\$20,000	\$0	\$250,000
Oat Hill Mine Trail including northern extension	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$0	\$100,000
Berryessa Vista Wilderness Park including access trails	\$1,000	\$5,000	\$0	\$500,000
Berryessa Peak Trail	\$1,000	\$5,000	\$0	\$0
Moore Creek Park including Lake Hennessey	\$5,000	\$30,000	\$10,000	\$300,000
Camp Berryessa	\$25,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$2,500,000
Skyline Park	\$5,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
Spanish Valley, Crystal Flats and Stone Corral	\$20,000	\$20,000	TBD	TBD
Bothe-Napa Valley State Park*	\$25,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$250,000
All other projects, including administration, insurance, legal obligations, public involvement, planning and implementation	\$300,000			
Subtotal	\$397,000	\$745,000	\$660,000	\$11,900,000
Net Annual Expenditures		\$482,000		
Annual grant from Napa County		\$600,000		
County grant available for use on capital projects		\$118,000		
Years to complete capital improvements (based on past experience)		9		
Years to complete capital improvements (50% local match)		101		

\*Note: The long-term capital needs for Bothe-Napa Valley State Park are much higher than shown; the figure here is only the initial target under the District's five year agreement with the State.