



**NAPA COUNTY REGIONAL PARK &  
OPEN SPACE DISTRICT**

Vacant  
*Director, Ward One*

Tony Norris  
*Director, Ward Two*

Patricia Clarey  
*Director, Ward Three*

Nancy Lewis-Heliotis  
*Director, Ward Four*

Barry Christian  
*Director, Ward Five*

## AGENDA

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS RESCHEDULED REGULAR MEETING

Monday, October 16, 2023 at 2:00 P.M.

Napa County Board of Supervisors Chambers, 1195 Third Street, 3rd floor, Napa, Calif.

Note: this is an in-person meeting.  
You may also attend and provide comments via Zoom Conference Call.

### Instructions for Joining Zoom Meeting

#### **Join Zoom Meeting**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82948786530?pwd=v1sWdkKow9GJ6JRkdpzz9rcbitKzga.1>

Dial by your location  
408 638 0968 US (San Jose)  
669 444 9171 US

**Meeting ID: 829 4878 6530**  
**Passcode: 968998**

Find your local number: <https://us06web.zoom.us/u/kdQcWjEvmR>

## General Information

Agenda items will generally be considered in the order indicated below, except for Set Matters, which will be considered at the time indicated. Agenda items may from time to time be taken out of order at the discretion of the President.

Requests for disability related modifications or accommodations, aids, or services may be made to the Secretary's office no less than 48 hours prior to the meeting date by contacting [rayers@ncrposd.org](mailto:rayers@ncrposd.org).

Prior to action on any item, the Board President will ask for comments from any member of the audience. After receiving recognition from the President, give your name, address, and your comments or questions. In order that all interested parties have an opportunity to speak, please be brief and limit your comments to the specific subject under discussion. Time limitations shall be at the discretion of the President.

State law requires agency officers (Directors and Officers) to disclose, and then be disqualified from participation in, any proceeding involving a license, permit, or other entitlement for use, if the officer has received from any participant in the proceeding an amount exceeding \$250 within the prior 12 month period. State law also requires any participant in a proceeding to disclose on the record any such contributions to an agency officer.

All materials relating to an agenda item for an open session of a regular meeting of the Board of Directors which are provided to a majority or all of the members of the Board by Board members, staff or the public within 72 hours of but prior to the meeting will be available for public inspection, on and after at the time of such distribution, in the NCRPOSD Office at 1195 Third Street, Suite 210, Napa, California 94559, Monday through Friday, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., except for County holidays. Materials distributed to a majority or all of the members of the Board at the meeting will be available for public inspection at the public meeting if prepared by the members of the Board or County staff and after the public meeting if prepared by some other person. Availability of materials related to agenda items for public inspection does not include materials which are exempt from public disclosure under Government Code §§6253.5, 6254, 6254.3, 6254.7, 6254.15, 6254.16, or 6254.22.

### 1. Call to Order and Roll Call

### 2. Public Comment

*In this time period, anyone may address the Board of Directors regarding any subject over which the Board has jurisdiction but which is not on today's posted agenda. In order to provide all interested parties an opportunity to speak, time limitations shall be at the discretion of the President. As required by Government Code, no action or discussion will be undertaken on any item raised during this Public Comment period.*

### 3. Set Matters

None.

### 4. Administrative Items

- a. Consideration and potential approval of minutes for Board of Directors regular meeting of September 11, 2023.
- b. Receipt of report on expenditures, encumbrances, donations, and grants approved by District staff for September 2023.
- c. Review of the District Projects Status Report.
- d. Receipt of monthly report for Bothe-Napa Valley State Park, Bale Grist Mill State Historic Park, and Robert Louis Stevenson State Park.

### 5. Announcements by Board and Staff

*In this time period, members of the Board of Directors and staff will announce meetings, events, and other matters of interest. No action will be taken by the Board on any announcements.*

6. Agenda Planning

*In this time period, members of the Board of Directors and staff will discuss matters for possible consideration at future meetings. Other than to determine whether and when such matters should be agendaized, no action will be taken by the Board on these items unless specifically noted otherwise.*

7. Adjournment



Vacant  
Director, Ward One

Tony Norris  
Director, Ward Two

Patricia Clarey  
Director, Ward Three

Nancy Lewis-Heliotas  
Director, Ward Four

Barry Christian  
Director, Ward Five

## MINUTES

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING

Monday, September 11, 2023 at 2:00 P.M.

Napa County Board of Supervisors Chambers, 1195 Third Street, 3rd floor, Napa, Calif.

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

**Directors Present: Tony Norris, Patricia Clarey, Nancy Heliotas, Barry Christian**

**Staff Present: Chris Cahill, Ryan Ayers**

2. Public Comment

**None.**

3. Set Matters

**None.**

4. Administrative Items

- a. Consideration and potential approval of minutes for Board of Directors regular meeting of August 14, 2023.

**Minutes for the July 10, 2023 regular meeting were approved as presented.**

**BC - NH - TN - PC**

- b. Consideration and potential adoption of revisions to the Board of Directors Regular Meeting Calendar for 2023.

**Following presentation by Chris Cahill; Directors adopted revisions to the Board of Directors Regular Meeting Calendar for 2023.**

**BC - NH - TN - PC**

- c. Consideration and potential approval of an amended license agreement with the Land Trust of Napa County regarding Dan's Wild Ride Trail and the Okin Preserve (Napa County APNs 025-030-018 and 025-030-019).

**Following presentation by Chris Cahill; Directors approved the amended license agreement with the Land Trust of Napa County regarding Dan's Wild Ride Trail and the Okin Preserve (Napa County APNs 025-030-018 and 025-030-019).**

**NH - BC - TN - PC**

d. Consideration and potential adoption of a process for filling the vacancy on the Board of Directors for Ward 1.

**Following presentation by Chris Cahill; Directors determined that the vacancy in Ward 1 will be filled through appointment, that the application deadline will be Monday, October 2 at 5PM, and that a new Ward 1 Director will be appointed at a special meeting in October with a date to be determined.**

**NH - PC - TN - BC**

e. Receipt of report on expenditures, encumbrances, donations, and grants approved by District staff for August 2023.

**Report presented by Chris Cahill, who noted acquisition of a used plug-in hybrid Subaru Crosstrek which will substantially increase the District’s fleet fuel economy; No action taken.**

f. Review of the District Projects Status Report.

**Report presented by Chris Cahill, who noted that the Mayacamas Preserve/Amy’s Grove will be open to the public on September 16, 2023; No action taken.**

g. Receipt of monthly report for Bothe-Napa Valley State Park, Bale Grist Mill State Historic Park, and Robert Louis Stevenson State Park.

**Report presented by Chris Cahill; No action taken.**

5. Announcements by Board and Staff

- **Director Clarey announced that the annual Napa Valley State Parks Association Harvest Dinner will be held on September 30, 2023 at the Bale Grist Mill. The Fund-a-Need campaign this year will be focused on renovating the Hitchcock home at Bothe-Napa Valley State Park into an educational center.**
- **Chris Cahill announced that applications were received and reviewed for the open Deputy General Manager position, with interviews to be scheduled later this month.**

6. Agenda Planning

- **Chris Cahill noted that there will be an upcoming special meeting scheduled for October to appoint a new Director in Ward 1.**

7. Adjournment

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_  
Tony Norris, Board President

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Ryan Ayers, District Secretary

KEY

Vote: TN = Tony Norris; PC = Patricia Clarey; NH = Nancy Heliotes; BC = Barry Christian

The maker of the motion and second are reflected respectively in the order of the recorded vote.

Notations under vote: N = No; A = Abstain; X = Excused; Ab=Absent



## **STAFF REPORT**

By: Chris Cahill and Barb Ruffino  
Date: October 16, 2023  
Item: **4.b**  
Subject: Receipt of report on expenditures, encumbrances, donations, and grants approved by District staff for September 2023

### RECOMMENDATION

Receive the report, no action required.

### BACKGROUND

Section III.A.(7) of the District By-laws authorizes the General Manager to bind the district for supplies, materials, labor, and other valuable consideration, in accordance with board policy and the adopted District budget, up to \$52,020, provided that all such expenditures are subsequently reported to the Board of Directors. Section III.A.(8) of the By-laws authorizes the General Manager to apply for grants and receive donations, subject to reporting such actions to the Board of Directors.

Attached is a report showing all District expenditures for **September 2023**. All Cal-Card purchases are itemized in the financial report.

**Agreement 23-14** With Land Trust of Napa County for purchase of the Hirth-Turkovich property (Not to exceed \$750,000)

**Agreement 22-12** **Amendment No. 1** - With Applied Civil Engineering to add geotechnical engineering services to scope of work for Suscol Headwaters Park (Not to exceed \$46,500 total)

**Agreement 23-15** With Johnny on the Spot for porta-potties at the Bale Mill (Not to exceed \$505)

Grants and donations for **September**:

<b>Online donations</b>	
<b>ReLeaf</b>	<b>\$110.00</b>
<b>Moore Creek Shirts</b>	<b>\$30.00</b>
<hr/>	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$140.00</b>
 <b>Iron Ranger Donations</b>	 <b>\$430.00</b>

**PARKS & OPEN SPACE DISTRICT -SEPTEMBER 2023 EXPENSE REPORT**

**Gen Admin Dept - 85000-00**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Account Name</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Vendor Name</b>	<b>Amount</b>
9/11/2023	Health Insurance Premiums	Kaiser Premium 10/23	Kaiser Permanente	\$ 1,590.45
9/28/2023	Business Travel	Inv #I712395519649-Jeep	Fastrak Service Center	\$ 7.00

**Moore Creek Dept - 85010-00**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Account Name</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Vendor Name</b>	<b>Amount</b>
9/5/2023	Maintenance Supplies	50to1 Premix 5 Gal	Napa Power Equipment	\$ 150.84
9/5/2023	Maintenance Supplies	Hose swivel, polaris bag, leaf rake	Dons Swimming Pool Center	\$ 101.29
9/5/2023	Other Professional Services	PARK 14-02 9/23 Sampling	Heritage Systems, Inc	\$ 128.33

**CAMP BERRYESSA 85010-03**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Account Name</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Vendor Name</b>	<b>Amount</b>
9/5/2023	Other Professional Services	Lab #Y080636 Camp Berryessa	Caltest Analytical Labs	\$ 100.00
9/5/2023	Waste Disposal Services	8/23 Garbage Service	Berryessa Garbage Service	\$ 433.90
9/11/2023	Construction Services	Fire Clean up Eco-Camp	Pridmore Bros Construction	\$ 17,500.00
9/11/2023	Construction Services	PARKS 23-11 Fire Clean up Admin	Pridmore Bros Construction	\$ 375.00
9/11/2023	Maintenance Supplies	Eco Flake bedding	Steves Hardware	\$ 12.98

**NRER - 85010-05**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Account Name</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Vendor Name</b>	<b>Amount</b>
9/11/2023	Other Professional Services	PARK 23-10 8/23 Litter Abatement	Napa Valley Support	\$ 500.00

**State Park - 85010-08**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Account Name</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Vendor Name</b>	<b>Amount</b>
9/5/2023	Maintenance Supplies	LED bulk, 10Y Photo	Steves Hardware	\$ 90.90
9/5/2023	Maintenance Supplies	Liquid chlorinator	Steves Hardware	\$ 69.19
9/5/2023	Maintenance Supplies	Misc hardware-Central Valley	Central Valley Builders	\$ 230.80
9/5/2023	Maintenance Supplies	Misc hardware-Central Valley	Central Valley Builders	\$ 34.95
9/5/2023	Rents & Leases	Diagnostic fee-Central Valley	Central Valley Builders	\$ 50.00
9/5/2023	Rents & Leases	Husky Oil Pump-Rental	Central Valley Builders	\$ 152.61
9/5/2023	Maintenance Supplies	Window/door sealant	Central Valley Builders	\$ 28.12
9/11/2023	Special Department Expense	Wheat berries, corn	Keith Giusto Bakery	\$ 628.06
9/11/2023	Health Insurance Premiums	Kaiser Premium 10/23	Kaiser Permanente	\$ 2,649.76



## Projects Status Report

October 16, 2023

### **Bay/River Trail - American Canyon to Napa**

*An 8+ mile recreational trail. Phase 2-B--Pond 10 to Napa Pipe.*

The design for the public crossing of the SMART tracks has been completed, and SMART, NRCA and the PUC have verbally agreed to allow the railroad crossing. A biological survey for the Fagan Marsh area has been completed; based on the results, CDFW has indicated they do not want the trail alignment to follow the levee on the north side of Fagan Marsh; District staff is reviewing the feasibility of an alternative alignment. The Board President and General Manager met with CADFW staff on June 12, 2018 to discuss CDFW concerns. Senator Dodd organized a meeting in October with the City of American Canyon, County of Napa and the District in an attempt to move the project forward, and another meeting with District staff and CADFW staff on November 28, 2018. Staff has been working with BCDC to determine whether CDFW plans to impose user fees for people walking on the trail along the edge of the wetlands would be allowed under DFW's permit from BCDC. CDFW in April approved policy changes for the Napa-Sonoma marshes, including use of bicycles on designated trails. The District and the City of American Canyon have been developing new and improved signage for the Wetlands Edge trailhead. The commemorative plaque for former Director Myrna Abramowicz was vandalized in June or July of 2020; Director Christian has taken the lead in getting a replacement plaque and the finished product is now installed and turned out excellent. Rick and Chris inspected the segment north of Soscol Ferry Road in mid-June and noticed some damage to the stabilized quarry fines tread due to work by Napa San in their easement. Because the construction project requires excavation in and around a manhole in the middle of the trail, the Butler Bridge segment is currently closed to protect public safety. Post-construction work on rehabilitating the tread of the trail was completed shortly after Thanksgiving and it is once again open and useable. On July 29<sup>th</sup> the Napa StoryWalk had its grand opening in American Canyon, turnout was light, probably due to the 4:00PM on Friday afternoon timing, but those who attended had a wonderful time. In early February 2023 the County of Napa began the extended process of updating its Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (or ALUCP), a document that is relevant to the District because adopted policies could impact our ability to someday complete the Napa River Trail, which would run through the Airport Land Use Compatibility planning area. District staff inspected the entire trail from American Canyon to Fagan Marsh in late January and has had initial conversations with the County planners running the project. We will be keeping an eye on the interests of future trail



development in the area. Chris, Ryan, and Jessica Ardizzone toured the Am Can Parks Foundation's Napa River Eco Center project in late April and had fruitful conversations with ACCPF and Napa RCD staff about the facility and outdoor education generally. The possibility of housing a new NCRPOSD South County ranger at the Eco Center was broached. Staff has been working on weed abatement along the Butler Bridge segment of the trail. The Napa StoryWalk will be in residence in American Canyon at Wetlands Edge Park for the month of August. A kickoff event was held August 5<sup>th</sup> in partnership with the City of American Canyon Parks and Recreation Department, American Canyon Community and Parks Foundation, and First 5 Napa County.

### **Berryessa Vista**

*Planning, stewardship and expansion of this 304 acre wilderness park.*

Volunteers working with the District have completed detailed GIS mapping showing all existing roads, creek crossings, vista points and potential campsites. The District sent a letter to all property owners in that area introducing the District, explaining the deed restriction prohibiting off road vehicles, and asking for their cooperation. Since then there has been less observed damage, although the problem is not resolved. Staff was planning on installing a gate to restrict OHV access, but this has proven infeasible. In 2014 the Land Trust acquired an 80 acre inholding between District and BLM land, based on a District Board action in November 2014 agreeing to acquire the property from the Land Trust at a later date when funding is available. District and Land Trust staff in April 2016 placed a camera on the property in an attempt to identify the off-road vehicle and motorcycle users who have been causing some damage to the property. Staff has been monitoring the cameras since spring 2016 and has noted a small decrease in illegal off road vehicle use; staff will continue to monitor the cameras. Staff is working on plans to create a formal boat-in backcountry camp at Berryessa Vista accessed from the BOR Capell Cove boat launch. Staff has been reviewing PG&E plans to grade and widen an access road to their high power lines that cross the property, to ensure the work does not cause future erosion nor increase vehicular trespass. The Bureau of Reclamation has completed environmental review and authorized the District to improve the trail leading from water's edge up into the District property and install directional signage. We had tremendous success at the volunteer trail building event in early February, building +/- 900 feet of new trail. Berryessa Vista burned in the August 2020 fires; once the ashes settle staff will need to assess damage and come up with a repair and restoration plan. Land Trust conservation easement monitoring which occurred in early 2023 indicated the property is in good shape. Staff has lifted the closure on the property we put in place after the LNU Fire. With lake levels being what they now are the property is only accessible by boat.

### **The Cove at Mt. Veeder**

*Conversion of a former Girl Scout camp into a park and trails.*

The Cove was severely burned in the October 2017 fires; since then staff has been working on cleanup. Staff hiked most of the property in early January and confirmed that fire damage is severe and extensive. In early February the County Wildlife Commission toured the Cove to inspect fire impacts and discuss ways in which they might direct funding to fire recovery efforts County-wide. Staff worked with a

forester to develop a plan for salvage logging to (a) remove hazardous dead trees in the campground area and (b) repair/improve the access road into the site. Doug McConnell (NBC's Open Road) segment on The Cove (and Suscol Headwaters), comparing the effects of the fires in each location and lessons learned, was aired on Sunday June 24, 2018. Salvage logging commenced in late May, 2018 and was completed during the week of July 23<sup>rd</sup> followed by the logger completing his clean-up and erosion control operations. Road rebuilding is complete. A State Employment Development Department funded crew of 4 (using fire emergency job training funds) started work on April 2, 2019 and continued through the end of 2019 chipping of much of the remaining woody debris and cutting larger logs into rounds for eventual splitting for firewood. In July 2019 we worked with our salvage logging contractor on improvements to the gravel driveway to make it more useable to visitors in 2WD vehicles. We met with a local engineer on site on Sep 5th to begin designing facilities for a rebuilt camp. Staff hiked the property extensively in February of 2019, trying among other things to relocate the old trails, but most have been destroyed by the 2017 fires and resulting erosion. The Mt Veeder Fire Safe Council secured a grant to fund fuel reduction work along the Mayacamas ridge on and near the Cove, and cleared downed and standing-dead trees along our ridgetop fire road. We have paused work on developing a new potable water system and septic system on the site while we reconsider our priorities in light of District finances, and the timeframe in which we think regular ongoing (as opposed to occasional special event-style) public camping will actually be desirable on the property once again. The Americorps team in January and February of 2021 constructed just under a half mile of new trail running up the ridge and towards Mount Veeder from the Cove bowl; it is much more gradual than the old trails (the old trail was 25-30%, new trail is about 9%). We have been in contact with mountain lion researchers from Audubon Canyon Ranch and given them permission to access sites through the Cove. In mid-November Rick dropped a large Douglas fir located near the previous camp fire area which survived the fire then gave up the fight this summer. Staff visited the property during the height of the December/January storms and were glad to find that erosion was mostly in check, probably due to the soaking but not flashy nature of the weather systems. We saw a significant amount of wet snow in late February/early March, which resulted in major impacts to standing dead trees, along with those that have been limping along since the fires. Thankfully our post-fire salvage logging operation removed most of the damaged trees from the more target rich center of the property. Rick met with neighboring property owners to discuss fixes from the winter rains (and resulting moderate to severe erosion) on our shared gravel road. Initial plans are for the District to provide drain rock and road base and for the neighbors to do the actual tractor work. Repairs to the gravel access drive are complete with the help and tractor work of our neighbors and shared easement owners and the road is now in good (if somewhat loose) condition. The Hirth/Turkovich acquisition is slated to close between the Land Trust and the sellers in a matter of days and is before this Board for approval in July. If approved, the purchase will completely transform the concept and possibilities for a public park including the Cove and the peak of Mt Veeder. The Turkovich acquisition (Hirth/Turkovich to Land Trust) closed in August and the Purchase and Sale Agreement between the Land Trust and the District was executed on August 30, 2023. We have three years to complete the purchase.

## EcoCamp Berryessa

*Redevelopment and operation of former Boy Scout Camp with a 64 bed group/environmental education camp with 8 tent cabins, 2 covered group activity centers, a canoe/kayak dock, a central amphitheater and campfire ring, and a shower and composting toilet restroom facility.*

A grant for \$50,000 to help with construction was provided by the Mead Foundation, together with a \$1.7 million grant from the State Coastal Conservancy. Construction of Phase I, which includes beds for up to 64 campers was completed in June 2016. Tuleyome. The BOR, and Forest Trails Alliance have completed the adjacent North End Trail, running from +/- Camp Berryessa to the north end of the Lake, approximately 7 miles each way. In early October, 2017 Caltrans delivered (at no cost to the District) the disassembled and individually numbered pieces of a former Monticello Road stone arch bridge to EcoCamp Berryessa; some have been placed around the property to restrict vehicle access and add character. The EcoCamp has been closed to the public since mid-March 2020 due to the pandemic. We have been taking the opportunity of this downtime to get on top of spring mowing and other projects and Sarah Clark has been inspecting the property at least once a week. Camp Berryessa suffered some damage in the August 2020 fires; the camp itself mostly escaped damage, but the power line to the camp was destroyed as was our camp host's mobile home and belongings. Power has now been restored and the water system seems to be working. We have had the water tested for VOCs (which can be created when plastic pipes melt) and the tests came back negative. We have three bids for cleaning up the burned caretaker site, ranging from \$17,500 to \$33,750. The BOR has secured funding to remediate some, or maybe even much, of the camp host site as part of a project to upgrade electrical infrastructure around the Lake post-fire. They will even be project managing the construction work itself and construction is slated to begin this month. It has yet to be determined how much site cleanup will be included in that project. Bookings for the spring and summer are coming in at a good clip. Reclamation has begun work on the camp host site electrical rehabilitation and Sarah has been working to repair tent cabins, which are starting to show some signs of age in what is a tough environment. As noted verbally at the March meeting, Napa County 4H, which recently lost its longtime home at Las Posadas State Forest, has relocated their summer camp to Camp Berryessa. Some issues with County food event permitting for the 4H camp have come up in the last minute, but we are working with our colleagues in PBES in hopes of getting them resolved so the camp can happen as planned. We are now in contract with Pridmores to, finally, execute the cleanup of the burned camp host site. Unfortunately we weren't able to secure federal funding for it in the end, so the costs will come out of the NCRPOSD budget. Napa County 4H successfully hosted their summer camp July 9 – 14 and campers reportedly thoroughly enjoyed the new location. This was one of the largest groups to utilize the facility for this duration and staff is evaluating infrastructure needs for groups this size at the camp. Sarah and Chris met with representatives of 4H to discuss the successes and failures of hosting the 4H camp at Camp Berryessa in summer 2023. 4H would like some renovations done to the camp to better accommodate their large (100+) person group. Given the lack of adequate soils on the site for septic, regulations designed to limit building near the lake, and the need for involved BOR review and pre-approval of any work, staff has informed 4H that renovations to the EcoCamp are not likely in the mid-term future. We have been working with 4H to identify potential alternate Napa County camp locations, including Enchanted Hills. Post-fire clean up of the camp-host site is now, finally, complete and the County has finalised our Debris and Ash Removal permit.

## **Mayacamas Preserve and Amy's Grove**

*Planning and permits for public use of the Mayacamas Preserve, of which Amy's Grove is part.*

The archaeological survey has been completed and did not find evidence of Native American activity. The botanical survey has been completed and submitted for review. Much of Amy's Grove burned in the October 2017 fires, but the damage appears to be limited. In Sept 2018 the Board approved placing a restrictive covenant over a portion of Amy's Grove, accepting the donation of an adjacent 7 acres of land, approving an option to acquire 164 acres north of Amy's Grove, and applying for a grant to help fund the purchase. Grant awards are expected to be announced in mid-2019. In late July 2019 we learned that we did not receive the Habitat Conservation Fund grant we had applied for to assist with the purchase of the 164 acres to the north. The purchase has been completed using District reserve funds. State Parks in June 2020 released the announcement of the per capita grant funds, which the District will use to reimburse about half the cost of the 164 acre purchase. An application for \$400,000 from the Prop 68 per capita grant program has been submitted, the grant agreement has been signed by the District, and a \$400,000 check from the State finally arrived in mid-February. Staff submitted a proposal in partnership with Enchanted Hills Camp to share an AmeriCorps team next January through March, which was approved on December 8th. The team arrived in mid-January and cleared brush from the future staging area on Dry Creek Road. Several volunteer work parties have since made even further progress on tearing down old buildings and salvaging the materials that can be reused. We have paused delivery of debris boxes and work on cleaning up the staging area pending the outcome of the June Board of Supervisors budget hearings as part of our broader campaign to limit spending until the budget issue is resolved. Ryan facilitated ICARE/SFBRWQCB fish surveying and creek assessment in Dry Creek at the Chamberlain acquisition in late May. To clarify project boundaries, sometime in the new fiscal year we will be renaming the Chamberlain and Kateley acquisitions the Mayacamas Preserve; Amy's Grove will be a named part of the park. Rick reports that the water in Dry Creek has been running very high, which is a good reminder that without some sort of bridge Mayacamas and Amy's Grove will be seasonally inaccessible. We are scouting for bridge locations and beginning to think about permitting and costs if we went that route. Also, the location of the proposed parking lot on the Kateley donation has gotten quite mucky, so drainage improvements of some kind will be necessary there if we are going to develop it into a parking lot. The trailbuilder who did the initial alignment work for the Suscol Headwaters trail system has contracted to do similar work at Mayacamas, which is a great outcome. Staff met with Ryan Gregory on-site in early April to get his experienced civil engineer's advice on parking lot logistics and the possibility of building a pedestrian bridge over Dry Creek. Neighboring property owners have been mowing the meadow portion of the Amy's Grove property with District permission to mitigate fire risks this summer and fall. We had 15 volunteers from Opus One out to pull broom at Mayacamas on June 2<sup>nd</sup>. Chris and Kyra completed a full wetfoot survey of Dry Creek from property boundary to property boundary in late May and discovered a number of useful and interesting things, including pools as deep as 8 feet and the remnants of a creek-spanning suspension bridge. On October 8 we once again hosted volunteers on the Kateley finger, removing woody debris and doing fuels management. Kevin Smallman made a last visit to the property to finalize our trail planning project. We had a substantial number of tree blowdowns in December and January and are just beginning the work of cleaning up. The heavy rains of the winter of 2022/2023 evidenced significant drainage issues in the Kateley Finger staging area; it now appears that drainage improvements, potentially even engineered drainage improvements, will be necessary if we are ever to allow regular wintertime

vehicular traffic in and out of that area. The local Napa Firewise council is conducting fuel reduction along Dry Creek Road abutting the Mayacamas and Amy's Grove properties and requested authorization from the District to do significant clearing 110 feet from the center line of the road. The District was not comfortable with the level of planned tree removal, so has agreed to a reduced project, which includes removing brush, trees that pose a hazard to the road, and trees </- 6" dbh, and limbing up of trees >6" dbh to reduce ladder fuels. The contractors will avoid areas that are unstable or where clearing could impact the creek. They also kindly agreed to chip much of the debris that remains from the District's own clearing efforts. We had a lengthy site visit with our partners at Redwood Trails Alliance (RTA) in late June, focused on planning and engineering a potential pedestrian suspension bridge crossing of Dry Creek and scoping a joint grant writing campaign to fund the buildout of the (eventual) park. Staff hosted the first public opening of the Mayacamas Preserve/Amy's Grove on September 16, and the event was a success.

### **Moore Creek Park Development**

*Improvements and operations at our 1,500 acre regional park in the Lake Hennessey watershed. Includes the Moore Creek unit on land owned by the District and the Lake Hennessey Unit on land owned by the City of Napa.*

The District's Moore Creek property (Moore Creek Unit) was expanded in 2012 through a lease agreement and operations plan with the City of Napa (Lake Hennessey Unit). The combined park opened on June 30, 2013. Many miles of trails have been constructed, fencing installed, emergency communications capacity set up, repairs made to the two houses on the property, and invasive French broom removal has been ongoing. Work was completed on the Conn Creek connector trail between the Moore Creek and Lake Hennessey units in June 2013. Lake Hennessey North Shore Trails formally opened with a ribbon cutting in October 2014. The Sam the Eagle Trail was completed in April 2015. The Gate House was re-roofed in November 2018 using the Moore Creek maintenance/repair reserve fund. Staff coordinated a meeting with CalFire and a neighbor to determine what level of tree trimming is needed on the neighbor's property next to the ranch house to comply with Firewise regulations and the trimming work is now underway. Napa Marble and Granite installed (well, carved) new trail signage for the Shoreline and Sam the Eagle trails in early September 2017. Old Man's Beard Trail was completed in February 2018. The Whiskey Ridge and Conn Peak Trails (along with the Conn Peak Spur), nearly three miles of new singletrack all-in, was completed in 2019. To help ensure public safety in light of the Covid-19 pandemic, staff and volunteers monitored both entrances to Moore Creek Park for most Fridays and weekends in March through July of 2020. The two tenants at Moore Creek Park had to evacuate for about two weeks as a result of the August 2020 fires, but were able to return just before Labor Day. They then had to evacuate again on September 28 due to the Glass Fire. Despite a number of additional autumn red flag days and closures, and a rare December red flag event, Moore Creek Park is unburned and in good shape. In March 2021 volunteers installed striping for the main parking lot (marked with pinned used fire hose segments) to make parking more efficient. Fuel management activities, focused on removing invasive broom and funded by a grant by the County Ag Commissioner are ongoing in the upper reaches of the park. The Dan's Wild Ride use permit application was filed with the County in early September 2021. We hope to get to County approval this calendar year. As noted in their recent comment letter, CalFire is concerned that a portion of the proposed trail (this is a section that uses an

existing deeded access drive) is located on Las Posadas property. We have completed inspections of the trail network at Moore Creek after the 100+ year storm of October 24<sup>th</sup> 2021 and though there are a number of trees down, the trails themselves held up remarkably well. On February 3<sup>rd</sup> Rick, Kyra, and Chris met with staff of the RCD to begin work on a Vegetation Treatment Plan funded by a major Coastal Conservancy fire readiness grant. The North Bay Bohemian annual readers' poll has named Moore Creek Park the best hiking park in Napa County for 2022. We have closed the Conn Peak Spur Trail until at least mid-June, due to its proximity to an active Bald eagle nest. The Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution establishing new no-parking zones at the end of Conn Valley Road in late July, 2022. The Dan's Wild Ride use permit modification was approved on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, against the objections of two neighbors (one of whom was a representative of CalFire's Las Posadas forest) who were concerned about the adequacy of our parking lots on busy weekend days. Almost like clockwork, as the sun came out and the rains dried up our usual wildflower season peak demand is hitting and the parking lots were full on Sunday April 1<sup>st</sup>. We are hosting a major VoCal volunteer event on the weekend of April 15<sup>th</sup> with hopes of nearly completing the Yip Trip (formerly Madrone) Trail. Rick is looking in to filling a large pothole which has opened up in the main parking lot over the winter. The pothole was filled by our resident caretaker and our gatehouse tenants, using donated rock, in mid-April. We have launched a social media campaign to alert visitors about the full parking lots and busy trails they can expect to experience at Moore Creek in a superbloom spring. Redux trail is complete and we are working with RTA to co-host a formal ribbon cutting at which we will be making a point to highlight the hard work of the RTA crew and the ongoing generous support of our local donors. Spring weed whipping, which is a time-consuming task for our small field staff, is almost complete. Jess, Rick and RCD staff met on-site in late June to begin mapping the fire fuels management work that has been completed by District staff as part of the RCD/Coastal Conservancy grant. The Napa StoryWalk was in residence on the Moore Creek Unit of the park for the month of July, with a kickoff event held on July 8<sup>th</sup> to officially open the activity. Our partners with Napa RCD and First 5 Napa County participated in the event and offered outdoor education activities for children. PG&E completed their power pole replacement project on September 14. Staff met with the Napa County DPW and their landscape architect to discuss tree planting in the area of the main parking lot to mitigate off-site tree removal resulting from a County bridge replacement project on Chiles Creek. The County would be responsible for watering the trees and would cover all costs.

## **Napa River Ecological Reserve**

*Manage public access and improve habitat for this State-owned property*

The District has been maintaining the parking lot and front meadow since 2008, after assuming a responsibility that had previously been handled by the County. Staff recently discovered that the agreement between the District and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, authorizing this partnership, expired at the end of 2017. Staff has approached CDFW about renewing the agreement, and continues to wait patiently for a decision from CDFW. In a telling sign of what can happen in unmanaged public open spaces, someone attempted to fell a young oak tree with a shotgun and perhaps a dozen rifled slugs in late December 2021. We have retained a number of casings as evidence. We have removed the porta-potty from the parking lot, both to reduce management costs (on a property that we no longer have an agreement to manage) and to mitigate some of the ongoing trash

issues that have been associated with it. In early August we hosted an in-service day for the Justin Siena High School teaching staff in partnership with Chip Bouril focusing on removing invasive oblong leaf spurge. Volunteers collected and properly disposed of fully nine 50-gallon contractor garbage bags of spurge. Mowing season has arrived, Rick reports needing to mow/weed whip the property every few weeks due to the heavy grass growth this winter. The recent wind event resulted in some oak damage that we have been working to buck and clear. Rick has been working with Chip Bouril on rehabbing the nature trail and plant signage at the reserve, as well as dealing with a fresh crop of graffiti. We have requested CaDFW permission to either update/renew or remove the native plant tags on the property, all of which are getting rangy and some of which are no longer located near the plants the purport to interpret. Staff has heard whisperings about the possibility of CalFire taking over the Yountville CA Fish and Wildlife property, which may explain CADFW's long term non-responsiveness about management of the EcoReserve site.

### **Oat Hill Mine Trail**

*Various improvements to the historic Oat Hill Mine Road.*

The District opened 8 miles of the historic Oat Hill Mine Road as a non-motorized trail in 2007 with the assistance of 130+ volunteers from Volunteers for Outdoor California. Cleanup of mercury contamination north of the opened section of trail, led by Tuleyome, was partly but not fully successful, delaying when the northern section of the road leading to Lake County can be completed. A 40 acre Randy Lee Johnson property along the route of the trail was donated in December 2014. Volunteers have over the years done extensive erosion control and vegetation clearing projects. The first 1.3 miles of the trail was bulldozed as a result of CalFire efforts to suppress the October 2017 wildfires, and this was extended further while fighting the 2020 Glass fire. Nearly all of the forest along the first 4 miles of the trail out of Calistoga burned in the Glass fire. Visitation at OHMT has been very high since mid-March of 2020. We staffed the trailhead on weekends in late March and early April, but have determined that the dispersed nature of the parking in Calistoga means that it handles the higher level of traffic well and we have since reduced monitoring to occasional check-ins. Staff has cleared the trail of downed trees and the trail is open between Calistoga and Holm's place. Repairs to the Aetna Springs trailhead kiosk as well as replacement of wayfinding signs that burned in the 2020 fires are now underway. John Woodbury (as a volunteer) and Rick have repaired the Aetna side kiosk and replaced the trail map, all of which were damaged in the 2020 fires. Field staff has been focusing on removing dead standing trees that could fall and potentially impact the trail. Tree mortality seems to be increasing as we near a year from last year's fire. The County and the District have been receiving calls from an adjacent property owner who would like to "improve" the trail to make it easier to drive to his property by Jeep. Rick is beginning work on the wintertime replacement of the burned trail signage on the Aetna side of the OHMT. We are aware that there are a number of trees down blocking the upper section of the OHMT. District State Parks staff are working diligently through the backlog of tree work they've been confronting and hope to get the trail cleared in the near future. Staff has not had a chance to make it to the top of OHMT for a post-snow inspection, but based on what we've seen elsewhere on the eastern ridgetops (for instance in Angwin and the PUC Forest) we expect a mess. The Aetna segment of the trail has reopened with the end of the gun deer hunting season.

## **Woodbury Properties**

*Acquire 480 acres next to Berryessa Estates from BLM at no fee through their Recreation and Public Purpose Act procedure. Manage Spanish Valley, Crystal Flats and Stone Corral (2,500 acres) open space preserves.*

The District in 2009 applied to BLM for a no-fee transfer of this property to the District; while this transfer was supported by BLM staff, the formal approval was delayed because of property title issues between BLM and BOR. By the time these issues were resolved personnel and priorities had changed at BLM, and the transfer application is stalled. The District completed the donation to the District of a small, 0.2 acre property that provides critical access to the northeast corner of the property. Prescribed burns were attempted for Spanish Valley in 2019 and 2020, but both had to be cancelled due to a combination of permit delays and uncooperative weather. Shortly after the 2020 prescribed burn was cancelled, the LNU Fire burned the entire valley. The district in the spring of 2020 completed the donation of a conservation easement over Spanish Valley to the Land Trust. The current President for the Association reached out to District staff just before the LNU fire, indicating a willingness to restart discussions about an agreement between the two. However, the LNU fire put those discussions on hold, and staff efforts in February and March of 2021 to reach out to the Association have not been responded to. Field inspection completed on August 30<sup>th</sup>; Spanish Valley looks surprisingly good given burn intensity. Less tree mortality than would be expected thus far. We have discovered what looks to be an illegal small scale mining operation on one corner of the Crystal Flats property. Staff removed all of the mining material in early December. Inexplicably, it had already been smashed by some unknown party, perhaps a claim jumper? District staff has been contacted by LBRID staff, who are concerned that a lack of rainfall this spring could leave Berryessa Estates without a source of drinking water. The General Manager has preliminarily ok'd the use District-owned properties to do hydrogeological assessments in hopes of finding alternate emergency water sources. Proposed exploratory work is focused on the Marina and adjacent to the Crystal Flats access drive. The GM has given Napa County permission to do additional exploratory drilling in hopes of finding reliable emergency water for the community of Berryessa Estates. Senator Dodd-funded veg management on our property, planned and undertaken by the local Berryessa Estates Fire Safe Council, is complete for the season. We were contacted by a neighboring property owner who had concerns about a large Gray pine on our property in mid-May. Staff is getting bids to have it removed. In the last months we've additionally been contacted about two large oaks located on our property that neighbors have concerns about, we'll be up to inspect those as well. Staff is securing quotes for the removal of the trees, the large Gray pine will likely be expensive.

## **Skyline Park**

*Permanent protection of Skyline Park and support for Skyline operations.*

Three past legislative efforts to authorize sale to the County failed due to unrelated disagreements between the state legislature and administration. Separately, the County in September 2009 approved a new park overlay zone and an updated Master Plan for Skyline Park. A fourth legislative effort by Assembly member Evans in 2010, sponsored by Napa County and supported by the District, was approved by the legislature and signed by the Governor, but the County and State General Services were



unable to agree on the fair market value of the property, negotiations stalled, and the legislative authorization expired. In October 2015, the State applied to the county to rezone Skyline Park by removing the Skyline Wilderness Park Combining District overlay, which would make it easier for the State to sell for development and at a higher price. However, the State never completed the application. Legislation introduced by Senator Wolk in January 2016 to authorize us to purchase the property stalled when the State announced it was opposed to any sale of Skyline Park to the District until completion of a state planning process for future health and welfare services; that planning process has apparently not progressed. SB 20 by Senator Dodd was approved in 2019, which again authorizes the State to sell Skyline Park to the District and/or county for the sole purpose of it continuing to be a public park. The Governor in late 2019 issued an Executive Order directing the State use surplus State Lands to develop affordable housing, and included 20 acres of Skyline Park as surplus land that could be used for this purpose, which complicates our efforts to purchase the park. In January 2019 the District sponsored the filming of a short feature for Doug McConnell's Open Road TV series to help build support for the purchase of Skyline. District staff began meeting with the State of California (Departments of General Services and State Hospitals) in July 2020 to discuss the purchase of Skyline Park pursuant to SB 20, but in October DGS informed the District they were too busy to work on this until early 2021. DGS in February 2021 assigned state staff to work on the appraisal of the property in anticipation of selling it; District staff is now in receipt of proposed appraisal instructions and has asked that they be revised to include a whole-park option. The District in 2019 obtained a TBID grant of \$20,000 to assist Skyline Park upgrade their web site including an on-line reservation system, improve their park map and brochure, and install an automatic pay machine on the River to Ridge Trail; the work was completed in the fall of 2019. The bicycle skills course was approved by the Board of Supervisors on January 11 and was fully executed in late February. The Redwood Trails Alliance has begun fundraising for the project and the plan is for them to construct the skills course as a voluntary cooperator at no cost to the District. The County of Napa Assistant CEO has taken lead on negotiating the Skyline purchase appraisal with the Department of General Services. Chris participated in an extensive site tour (interestingly including Camp Coombs and the Coombs Ranch Dam canyon) in late March with the appraiser and representatives from the Department of General Services, the State Hospital, and Skyline. The final appraisal is slated to be completed in June. In early May, +/-5 acres of the flat lower portion of Skyline Park was included in a list of potential affordable housing sites presented to the Board of Supervisors by the County's Planning Director. On July 11 the Planning Commission hosted a hearing on the Housing Element that featured much discussion of the Skyline (County staff prefers the term "Imola") public housing site. Ryan has been collaborating with a number of individuals and community organizations to develop a StoryWalk that will be hosted by Skyline Park and Wetlands Edge Park over the next several months. Opening day was at Skyline on July 2<sup>nd</sup> and was attended by many well wishers and dignitaries. In early November we co-hosted a Ridge Trail work day on the River to Ridge Trail with partners at Skyline Park. 40 volunteers attended. County of Napa/State of California acquisition negotiations and work continue at a furious pace. Surveyors have been on the property since the week before Thanksgiving and the County has contracted with a geologist to complete a mineral resources report in support of a potential State Lands Commission action to surplus the mineral rights to the County along with fee title. The State Phase 1 environmental analysis is complete and did not identify any serious issues. Skyline staff has been supporting NCRPOSD in the construction of Zane Trail and is addressing homeless issues along the River to Ridge Trail. The pump track is complete and, while not yet formally

open to the public, it is getting occasional “soft opening” type use and has proven extremely popular with children and adults alike. We are looking to a potential October grand opening.

## **Smittle Creek**

*Planning and permits to open this 411 acre holding for public use.*

The District completed purchase of this property in December 2015. A botanist was retained in early 2016 to do a reconnaissance level survey of plant resources as the first step in planning for the property; his report was received in January 2017; the report describes the property as one of the best locations in the County for native grasses. A group of 20+ people from Tuleyome were given a hiking tour of the property in December 2016, as a way to build interest in the property and build a pool of volunteers to help with restoration and improvement of the property. On March 4 2017, Tuleyome volunteers brushed the Iron Mountain trail (in the Cedar Roughs Wilderness, but accessed via Smittle Creek.) US Geological Survey in 2017 placed a seismic monitoring station on the property. The State Fish and Wildlife Game Warden for this area has been most helpful in patrolling the property looking for illegal poaching. A well-attended volunteer cleanup project was held in October of 2018, more than filling a 30 yard dumpster with debris. Our volunteer caretaker for this property has made repairs to the dirt roads and the perimeter fencing. Staff in January 2020 flagged a route for the proposed new trail access into the property from Reclamation's Smittle Creek Day Use Area parking lot, and a botanist has been retained to conduct a floristic survey this winter and spring. Kyra Purvis is working on the CEQA analysis and on putting together a use permit application to the County of Napa to open Smittle Creek to the public. Kyra also continues to work with Reclamation on an agreement to authorize the public to use their Smittle Creek Day Use Area parking lot to access our property. All of Smittle Creek burned in the August 2020 fires. The entry gate and fence the District shares with Reclamation was burned; a temporary fix has been made, but further work will be needed. Staff has had initial discussion with County Public Works about including access improvements at Smittle in a larger grant application aimed at funding work on Knoxville-Berryessa Road. It would apparently make the County's road grant application more attractive to funders and would of course mean new District money for opening the park (if the grants come through). The County expects to hear whether or not it has been shortlisted for the grant sometime in mid to late summer 2021. If award of the grant seems likely we would potentially have most of our development costs funded, but would unfortunately need to slow progress on the property to mesh up with the more measured pace of Federal funded transportation projects. Federal DOT funding officials completed a site visit of the Smittle Creek parking area and potential trail improvements in late April, preliminary reports from County DPW indicate it went well and we may be on a path to funding. It appears that there has been some trespassing and poaching on the property during the 2022 deer season, we are in communication with CaDFW wardens about the situation. Rick has posted a new closed to the public sign on the front gate, replacing the one that was stolen during deer season. Rick and the Napa County Sheriff ran an armed trespasser (who purported to be hunting quail) off the property in early November. Great heads-up work by Rick in what was otherwise a fairly iffy situation. The Federal Highway Administration has approved Napa County Public Works' application for the California Federal Lands Access Program to fund work on Knoxville-Berryessa Road near Smittle Creek. Public Works' project includes funding for the Smittle Creek trail, the crossing of Knoxville-Berryessa Road from the existing BOR parking lot, and parking lot rehabilitation. We continue to see

some trespassing and illegal camping on this property. Staff developed a more prominent sign to help keep trespassers and hunters out of this property, and our volunteer caretaker has constructed a strong permanent metal frame for the sign to discourage vandalism.

## **State Parks**

*Operate Bothe-Napa Valley State Park, Bale Grist Mill State Historic Park, and RLS State Park.*

The District, with assistance from the Napa Valley State Parks Association, took over management of the parks on April 1, 2012. Since then the District has obtained permits and done improvements to the pool, installed 7 yurts, instituted recycling in the campground and day use areas, pumped all septic system tanks annually, repaired the historic Wright House for use as a rental property, restored 5 cabins, constructed a new shower/toilet facility, and made a large dent in the backlog of deferred maintenance. District efforts to pass legislation allowing the sale of grain for human consumption from the Bale Mill were unsuccessful. In 2014 the District started the process of extending the District's 5 year Operating Agreement and including RLS in the agreement, that new 20 year agreement was signed in April 2020. The District repaired the Silverado House at RLS, which a District employee now rents and maintains. The District is working with the Vine Trail on the proposed alignment of the Vine Trail through Bothe. As noted elsewhere, visitation at Robert Louis Stevenson State Park has been very high in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. Between March and June of 2020 staff and volunteers monitored the parking lot off Highway 29 during peak times to assist the influx of new users. The majority of Bothe State Park burned in September's Glass Fire, though none of the buildings were damaged. Ridge Trail Day occurred on Saturday November 6<sup>th</sup>; volunteers worked to delete and restore a number of switchback-cutting social trails on Mount St Helena. Construction of the Vine Trail section in and near the State Park has been proceeding at a fast clip, with the main struggle being keeping the public off the half-built trail.

## **Suscol Headwaters Park**

*Improvements to Suscol Headwaters Preserve and opening the property as a public park.*

The purchase of the Preserve was completed in November, 2017. The one remaining improvement to satisfy funding requirements is the construction of a California red legged frog (CRLF) breeding pond and various habitat improvements focused on, but not exclusively in, the pond area. A reserve fund has been set aside to do the work, but the actual work has been delayed while design and construction details are worked out. Most of the property burned in the October 2017 firestorm; some trees were killed, and a perimeter grazing fence was destroyed, but otherwise damage was not catastrophic. We have installed No Trespassing signs adjacent to ranch roads descending off of Suscol Knob to further limit access to the lower portions of the preserve, where property lines are not necessarily well marked or fenced. The District hired local trail builder Kevin Smallman to help with trail corridor planning and spent May 10 and 11 of 2019 hiking and flagging the property. A Use Permit for Suscol Headwaters Park was approved by the County Planning Commission in February 2020 and the northern portion of the property is now officially open to the public via Skyline Park. Kyra and Supervisor Ryan Gregory were interviewed on site by Doug McConnell in late May as part of his Open Road series on NBC Bay Area. John Woodbury was out in the field in early February, and again in March and April, working on the design and (hopefully)

future construction of the red legged frog pond. Jeff Alvarez, a renowned Red-legged frog specialist has been working with John on the plans. Kyra finalized and submitted a \$1.2M Prop 68 Regional Park Program grant application to fund development of a N Kelly Road trailhead and the complete Suscol Headwaters trail network. We have been awarded the \$1.17M Prop 68 grant to fund the development and opening of Phase 2 of Suscol Headwaters! Now the real work begins. Kyra and Chris (but mostly Kyra) have been working on Suscol with singular focus over the last month: trail and park planning, visiting the site with our consulting trail boss, working on the ins and outs of contracting to complete the trail work, completing a successful RFQ for civil engineering services, working on an RFQ for appraisal services, meeting with permitting agencies, and pushing the grant managers at the State on funding timelines. We have signed a contract with Applied Civil Engineering for design and engineering services for the new Suscol Headwaters parking lot. Chris and Kyra met onsite with Applied Civil Engineering to review parking lot design and subsequently received preliminary designs from them. We have signed contracts with Redwood Trails Alliance for construction of the Perdida Trail and with Kevin Smallman for equipment rental for construction of the Zane Trail, as well as the grant agreement with the State. Colliers is proceeding with the appraisal of the trail and parking lot easement on Napa San land. Kyra and Chris also met with Napa San engineers to discuss the layout of the proposed parking lot, and our engineers are proceeding with an orientation that works with Napa San's continued ranch operations surrounding the parking lot. Jake Rugyt has completed his botanical report for the Phase II portion of the property. Napa Sanitation District has indicated they are comfortable with the appraisal and has scheduled sale of the trail and parking lot easement area for the July and August board meetings. Our hope is the sale can close this summer. The Perdida (RTA) and Zane (NCRPOSD/Smallman) trails are under construction and we hosted the Napa Register in late May as they put together an article, due in July, on the Suscol project. RTA and District staff have determined that the western end of the Perdida Trail would be better resolved if it crossed over the existing ranch road and made a number of descending switchbacks on District property to the west. That work is well outside the scope of the Perdida contract, so we will be issuing a separate contract for it and awarding it to RTA on a sole-source basis due to the presence of their equipment right there and the ease with which they could pivot to that build from Perdida upon completion. Construction of the Perdida Trail is complete and the RTA trail crew have begun work on the Perdida+ extension and the Chance the Cowboy Trail. There is a hearing slated for early September with Napa Sanitation regarding the easements for the parking lot and access trail for the park. Final Napa San approval of the easement purchase has been delayed, as Napa San is asking for a surveyed legal description of the parking lot area, requiring an RFP and securing a (generally busy) surveyor. RTA has pulled their equipment out of Suscol until the rains return as the soils and fuels have gotten too dry. Staff approved a change order to clarify the scope of the Chance the Cowboy build in late September. We continue to tussle with State Parks about the first (May, 2023), still unpaid, grant reimbursement, but have a glimmer of hope that that may be resolved in the next month and we may see our first payment.

## **Vine Trail**

*A Class I bicycle/pedestrian path extending from Calistoga to the Vallejo Ferry Terminal sponsored by the Vine Trail Coalition, of which the District is a participating member.*

The District has an MOU with the Vine Trail Coalition to provide assistance as requested by the Coalition in receiving funds, preparing plans and environmental documents, and constructing and operating the trail. The District, the Bay Area Ridge Trail, the San Francisco Bay Trail and the Vine Trail Coalition prepared a joint Case Statement for the combined trail network for fundraising purposes. Over the years the District has submitted numerous letters of support for Vine Trail grant applications. The District continues to coordinate with the Vine Trail on plans to route the Vine Trail through Bothe-Napa Valley State Park. A joint Vine Trail/Ridge Trail dedication event was held at Bothe in 2014. In March 2015 the Vine Trail initiated discussions with district staff about the possibility of the District providing maintenance for the entire Vine Trail, but in the end the cities and the county decided that each entity will maintain the section within their jurisdiction, rather than paying into a common fund for common maintenance. Caltrans is proposing to replace the aging bridge over Mill Creek; since the construction as proposed could have significant adverse effects for both the Vine Trail and the Bale Mill, District and Vine Trail staff meet with Caltrans and NVTa to discuss ways to mitigate the impacts. In Sept 2018 the Vine Trail Coalition requested the District accept an easement to facilitate the trail connection between Kennedy Park and Napa Pipe. Staff met with the Vine Trail and Syar in March 2019 to work out details related to the easement. A revised version of the easement, and an associated agreement allocating responsibilities is still being negotiated. At the request of the Vine Trail Coalition, staff is exploring with the County whether to take on the eventual maintenance of the section between Calistoga and St. Helena, with the costs to be paid 50/50 by the County and the Coalition. A similar agreement between the County, the City of Napa and the Vine Trail was approved by the County Board of Supervisors in January 2021. Jason, Chris, and Kyra met with Philip Sales in early July to inspect the St Helena – Calistoga segment and recommence discussions about the District potentially taking over maintenance responsibility for that section. After much thought and research staff has reached a point where we believe we may be able to take over maintenance of the St Helena to Calistoga section without committing to potentially subsidizing the work out of District funds. We are continuing to scope the initial capital outlay for tools and equipment, which will not be insignificant, and are finalizing the terms of a draft 5-year management agreement between ourselves, the County of Napa, and the Vine Trail Coalition. If that proceeds to agreement at the staff level, the Board should expect to see it this fiscal year sometime. A District draft of the proposed management agreement was submitted for County and Vine Trail review in late March. Groundbreaking for the St Helena to Calistoga Vine Trail segment took place on May 24<sup>th</sup> at the State Park. Tony Norris and Jason Jordan represented the District. Chris provided the County and the Vine Trail Coalition with edits on what may well be the final draft of a maintenance agreement for the St Helena to Calistoga Vine Trail section just before Thanksgiving. That agreement will proceed to the NCRPOSD Board for review and potential adoption once staffers at the three agencies have come to final terms. Completion of the Up Valley segment is now estimated for very late 2023. The NCRPOSD/Vine Trail/County of Napa Up Valley Vine Trail maintenance was approved by the Board of Supervisors in June and is now (finally) fully executed.

## Completed Projects

### **Amy's Grove**

*Donation of 50 acres along Dry Creek and Wing Creek.*

The donation of approximately 50 acres of open space from the Chamberlain family to the District closed in December 2015.

### **Bay Area Ridge Trail Realignment**

In December of 2012 the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council approved the proposed realignment of the Ridge Trail through Napa County as requested by the District.

### **Bay Area Ridge Trail Napa-Solano Ridge Trail Loop**

The Bay Area Ridge Trail Council obtained a donated easement from the Tuteur family and constructed a section of Bay Area Ridge Trail adjacent to Skyline Park. In March 2018 the Ridge Trail Council transferred the easement to the District, and with the support of the Tuteur family revised the easement to facilitate an extension of the trail south onto the District's Suscol Headwaters Preserve.

### **Bay/River Trail - American Canyon to Napa Phase I**

*Phase One - Eucalyptus Drive to Green Island Road.*

Constructed approximately 5 miles of Class I bicycle and pedestrian path in the vicinity of American Canyon along the Napa River was completed in April 2012, in partnership with the City of American Canyon, Department of Fish and Game and Napa Vallejo Waste Management Authority. A formal opening ceremony was held June 2, 2012.

*Phase Two - Pond 10.*

DFW surfaced the existing levee with gravel and opened the gate to the public in spring 2015.

*Phase Three - Soscol Ferry Road to Napa Pipe*

Completed construction in spring of 2015 of 0.7 miles between Soscol Ferry Road and the Napa Pipe property in the Napa Valley Corporate Park.

### **Berryessa Peak Trail**

*Obtain right of way and construct trail to provide public access to extensive federal lands on Blue Ridge and to Berryessa Peak.*

Obtained donated trail easement from the Ahmann family to close gaps between existing public lands on Blue Ridge. A Negative Declaration and Use Permit hearing was approved December 16, 2009 by the County Planning Commission. An Operations and Management Plan was approved by the property owner and the District. BLM's biologist inspected the alignment on September 17, 2011. The trail was constructed over the course of two years using volunteer crews, and continues to be maintained by volunteers (mostly provided by Tuleyome and Yolo Hiker)

### **Berryessa Vista Acquisition**

Purchase of 224 acres from the Land Trust of Napa County for use as a public park completed in early 2008 using State Prop 12 funds.

### **Cedar Roughs/Smittle Creek**

Purchase of 443 acres of land that will provide public access to Cedar Roughs from the Smittle Creek Day Use Area closed in December 2015.

### **Connolly Ranch**

Construction of patio, restrooms and cooking facilities completed in 2008 using State Prop 12 funds.

### **The Cove at Mt Veeder**

The acquisition of 164 acres from the Girl Scouts was completed in December 2017.

### **Historic ROW Analysis**

Staff has completed a comprehensive review of historic rights-of-way, and is now focusing attention on those that have greatest potential.

### **Linda Falls Conservation Easement**

Conservation easement accepted in spring 2008 from Land Trust of Napa County to provide additional protection for this 39 acre property, which is owned by the land trust. The easement was revised and expanded in 2016 to cover the entire Linda Falls property owned by the Land Trust. This is a continuation of a long-term project for the district and land trust to hold easements over each other's properties to protect against unforeseen circumstances that could threaten the conservation values of the properties.

### **Master Plan Development and Updates**

The Master Plan for 2008-2013 was approved in January 2009. It was updated in 2011 and again in 2019.

### **Moore Creek Open Space Park**

Acquisition of 673 acres in the Moore Creek Watershed completed in December 2008. The City of Napa subsequently approved an agreement with the District to incorporate approximately 900 acres of City of Napa Lake Hennessey watershed lands into Moore Creek Park.

### **Napa River Ecological Reserve Improvements & Restoration**

Parking area paved, and rock barrier installed to control vehicular access in 2007. Trash enclosure constructed and entry signs restored by volunteers in 2008. Deteriorated kiosk and interpretive panels removed in 2008. The District in July 2008 assumed the County's role in managing the preserve under the joint management agreement with DFG. A new maintenance contract with the non-profit organization Options 3 was started in January 2009. A multi-year project resulted in the removal of the bulk of the invasive teasel that had taken over the 5 acre meadow at the entrance to the Reserve, and the construction of a short native plant interpretive trail. In doing this work, several thousand students received a day of environmental education about native and invasive plants and riparian ecology.

### **Napa River Flood Control Easement**

Conservation easement accepted by District in 2007 to facilitate Flood District project and grant funding.

### **Newell Preserve Improvements**

As part of the arrangement with the land trust on the District's purchase of Berryessa Vista, the land trust was willing to use some of the proceeds from the transaction to fund a well pump and distribution system at the Preserve, which is owned by the City of American Canyon. However, the first well drilled by the City of American Canyon came up dry. The City has dropped plans for digging any more test wells.

### **Oat Hill Mine Trail**

The Oat Hill Mine Trail was formally opened in May Of 2008, after a major volunteer work party doing signage installation, brush removal and erosion control. The District in 2008 applied to BLM for a non-fee transfer to the District of a 40 acre parcel at Maple Springs on the Oat Hill Mine Trail; BLM in April 2016 indicated they did not want to transfer this parcel, so the District's application has been dropped.

### **River to Ridge Trail**

Lot line adjustment to legalize River to Ridge Trail as constructed (it had encroached on private property in two locations). Animal silhouettes along the entryway fence illustrating the types of birds and mammals that can be found in the area were installed by an Eagle Scout candidate in 2008. A new information kiosk was installed at the entrance in December 2008 as part of a Boy Scout project. In 2011 volunteers made some drainage improvements.

### **Skyline Park Road and Trail Improvements**

Erosion control work on Lake Marie Road, and paving of campground loop road, completed in 2007 using State Prop 12 funds. The District and the Skyline Park Citizens Association have continued to cooperate on various trail maintenance projects.

### **Skyline Park Concessionaire Agreement Renewal**

District staff negotiated renewal of concessionaire agreement on behalf of the County in 2010, 2015 and 2020. The renewal involved changes to the fee schedule and amendments to and approval of sub agreements with three non-profit partner organizations.

### **Skyline Park Facility Improvements**

The proposals for a second greenhouse (from CNPS) and a covered equestrian arena (from Skyline Riders) were approved by the Department of General Services and by the County Board of Supervisors. The sponsors of these projects however ended up not pursuing either project.

### **Suscol Headwaters Preserve Acquisition**

Acquisition of 709 acres of the former Kirkland Ranch in two phases was completed in November 2017.



### **Trinchero/Putah Creek Open Space Acquisition**

The donation by the Trinchero family of 2,500 acres of open space (Spanish Valley, Crystal Flats and Stone Corral) was completed on December 29, 2010. A related granting of an access easement to the Lake Berryessa Resort Improvement District was completed in mid-January 2011.

### **Wild Lake Ranch**

The District participated in the development of a strategic plan for the property, together with other public lands in the area, that was led by the Land Trust of Napa County. The land trust has decided, at least for the near term, to manage the Wildlake-Duff property itself.

## **Deferred/Cancelled Projects**

### **Milliken Reservoir Trails and Picnic Area Feasibility Study**

The feasibility study to *construct approximately 3 miles of Bay Area Ridge Trail plus additional feeder and loop trails, along with a staging and picnic area* within the City of Napa's Milliken Watershed was completed and accepted by the Board of Directors in 2009. The Napa City Council in November, 2009 approved city staff recommendation to hold off on considering the Milliken Reservoir trails project until the Lake Hennessey Unit of Moore Creek Park is completed.

### **Montesol West**

The District had the opportunity to purchase 1,254 acres west of Highway 29 adjacent to Robert Louis Stevenson State Park. The area's conservation values were protected through an easement negotiated by the Trust for Public Land and now held by the Land Trust of Napa County. Purchase of fee title would permit the area to be used for public recreation. The District prepared and obtained a Habitat Conservation Program grant that, together with a Moore Foundation grant obtained by the Trust for Public Land, would fully fund the purchase. Public outreach to Middletown area residents in 2017 were positively received. Unfortunately, the option expired at the end of February without TPL exercising it, because we were unable to provide the type of liability insurance the seller wanted to protect his interest in carbon credits that they had sold to the State over timber located on the property.

### **Rector Ridge/Stags Leap Ridge Trail**

*Construction of staging area and 6+ miles of Ridge Trail climbing east from Silverado Trail near Rector Creek.*

CEQA on this project was completed several years ago, the project concept was approved by the District Board, and was positively viewed by the Veterans Home administration. However, subsequent changes and controversies within the Department of Veterans Affairs undid the progress we had made. The area in question also involves the Department of Fish and Wildlife, since they have an easement to allow hunters to use the area; the Department was initially supportive of the District pursuing a formal trail through the property, but personnel changes within their Department means their review also needs to be restarted. Finally, with the approval of the Go North alignment of the Bay Area Ridge Trail, this segment of trail is no longer part of the officially proposed alignment for the Ridge Trail. For all these reasons, this project is deferred until other District priorities are under control.

## **Vallejo Lakes**

*Possible purchase of 1100 acres of surplus Vallejo Water District lands, of which 200 acres are located in Napa County, and Lake Curry which is entirely in Napa County.*

Discussions between the District, the Land Trust of Napa County, the County of Solano and the Solano Land Trust indicate a common desire to work together to purchase this property adjacent to Skyline Park. The City Council of the City of Vallejo officially authorized staff to pursue surplussing of the property, and hired an appraiser to prepare an estimate of the property's fair market value, but this was never released. The District GM, together with the County of Solano EO, in February 2012 each sent letters to the City of Vallejo formally expressing interest in the property and requesting notification per state law of any planned surplussing of the property. Sale of the property by the City has been delayed because of complications related to questions about how best to supply water to residents in Green Valley. Staff from the District and its partners met with the Vallejo City Manager in April 2014; the surplussing process has become more complicated and the City does not anticipate any action in the near future. Staff had a very interesting meeting with City of Vallejo water division staff and a tour of Lake Curry in late May. The Lake Curry property can only be described as a jewel, and the City of Vallejo would clearly like to divest it, but doesn't know how to do this. Solano County in 2015 investigated the feasibility of acquiring the lakes and managing their water supplies; as part of this investigation they expressed interest in partnering with the District to manage public recreational access, but no decisions were made. Further progress on this project depends on the City of Vallejo and Solano County; the District cannot do more until they decide what direction to head.



## **STAFF REPORT**

By: Jason Jordan  
Date: October 16, 2023  
Item: **4.d**  
Subject: September 2023 State Park Report for Bothe-Napa Valley SP, Robert Louis Stevenson SP, and Bale Grist Mill SHP.

### PARK STATUS

**Bothe Napa Valley SP**- Overnight occupancy remains steady on weekends with lighter weekday camping.

**Bale Mill SHP**- Visitation continues to be low at the mill.

**Robert Louis Stevenson SP**- Hiking numbers are lower but will pick up with cooler days in the fall.

### PARK UPDATES

- Pool Update: All work is completed on the pool except for the gutter surfacing and installation of the handrail for the steps.
- Bale Bridge Update: NVSPA submitted check for remaining balance to the fabricator for the new steel stringers for the bridge project. A meeting was held with State Parks to discuss a funding option for State Parks labor for construction.
- The NVSPA Online Auction launched on September 15<sup>th</sup> and closed on October 1<sup>st</sup>. The NVSPA Board was able to get a lot of great items that will generate significant funds.
- NVSPA board and NOSD staff prepared the Mill and coordinated set up for the annual Harvest Dinner on September 30<sup>th</sup>. The event was a great success despite the threat of rain.
- Two field trips from Calistoga Junior High School were held at Bothe in September for a combined total of 148 students. An additional field trip was scheduled but cancelled by the school.
- The third Saturday hike this month at the Mayacamas Preserve and Amy's Grove. This was a guided hike to explore this forested area along Dry Creek in the Mayacamas Range and sneak peak of what the property could become. There were 16 people in attendance.
- The St Helena Cross Country Volunteer event was postponed until October due to low sign ups.
- The Bale Mill water suppression system was inspected, and a repair was made to at pressure switch that was malfunctioning.

- Staff is planning and conducting market research for equipment needed for Vine Trail maintenance work.
- ADA yurt sites were resurfaced and top dressed to stay in compliance and address winter erosion issues.
- Progressing on research, merchandise ordering and account set up for the Visitor Center.
- Planning and recruiting for upcoming Old Mill Day's community event.
- Planning for upcoming volunteer events (St Helena Cross Country, Bay Area Climbing Club, Pacific Union College).