

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THURSDAY, JULY 15, 2010  
MISSION TRAILS REGIONAL PARK TASK FORCE**

TIME AND PLACE

The meeting of the Mission Trails Regional Task Force was held on July 15, 2010 in the classrooms of the Mission Trails Regional Park Visitor and Interpretive Center, One Father Junipero Serra Trail, San Diego, California 92119.

ATTENDANCE

Members Present

Councilmember Marti Emerald, City of San Diego  
Councilmember Brian Jones, City of Santee  
Councilmember Ruth Sterling, City of La Mesa  
Councilmember Donna Frye, City of San Diego  
Dorothy Leonard, Mission Trails Regional Park Citizens' Advisory Committee Chair

City of San Diego

Park and Recreation Department: Open Space Deputy Director, Chris Zirkle  
Park and Recreation Department, Open Space District Manager, Steve Haupt  
San Diego City Water Department: Nelson Manville  
Council District 7 Staff Representatives: Cynthia R. Harris

Members Absent

Supervisor Pam Slater, County of San Diego  
Supervisor Dianne Jacob, County of San Diego

Guests

City of Santee, Director of Community Services Department Bill Maertz  
MTRP Foundation Administrative Assistant, Roland Roberge  
Padre Dam Municipal Water District, Herman S. Lowenberg  
San Diego County Water Authority, Mojgan Poursadighi  
CAC Member at large, Retired SDPD, Dale Shockley  
SDPD, Lt. Ken Steward  
SDPD, Sgt. Jeff Napier

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Marti Emerald at 12:20 P.M.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**MOTION:** Approve the minutes of May 27, 2010 (Sterling / Leonard) carried unanimously.

REQUEST FOR CONTINUANCES

None

### CHAIRPERSON REPORT

Councilmember Marti Emerald discussed pending acquisitions of new land to be conveyed to the City of San Diego as part of MTRP. These lands include the Rancho Encantada (McMillin) property, and potential SDG&E interests. Marti indicated that she had a recent meeting with Jeff Brazel (McMillin) and discussed those issues that have delayed turning acreage over to the City of San Diego. Issues included the need for SDG&E to utilize open space lands to be conveyed to the City of San Diego as lay-down locations for equipment and construction materials for Sunrise PowerLink. In meeting with Jeff Brazel, it appears that SDG&E may be easing up on some of the difficulties in conveying McMillin lands in order to use portions of these lands for SDG&E equipment and material lay-down sites. Jeff Brazel also indicated that SDG&E was willing to give money to Mission Trails for the use of this land for proposed improvements.

Councilmember Emerald also discussed recent meetings with San Diego Fire Department (SDFD), and the need to improve emergency response times, particularly on Cowles Mountain. Several ideas were discussed, including providing GPS system that could be used in rescues, or a change in signage which would make it easier for visitors in distress to provide accurate locations to emergency responders. Ms. Emerald mentioned several other sign ideas including color designations, animal/plant names, or some other easy to understand signage that visitors could use to provide their location. Councilmember Emerald indicated she would work with San Diego Police Department (SDPD) and SDFD to come up with ideas to improve safety on Cowles Mountain and other areas in the park. There was additional discussion on the condition of helicopter landing zones on Cowles Mountain, and the need to improve these for rescue operations. Dorothy Leonard explained to Ms Emerald that the MTRP CAC and Task Force have, within the last couple of years, approved names for trails in the park and that any additional signs should reflect the approved trail names. The MTRP Foundation is seeking grant funding for fabricating and installing signs that are consistent with the approved trail names. Councilmember Emerald also said that in her meeting with the Fire Department that rescues were taking up to and exceeding 40 minutes, and that any change to improve these response times were a high priority. Ms. Emerald also discussed potential grant funding that could be used for improving conditions by signage, GPS, and other methods, to facilitate more rapid response by First Responders.

### CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE / FOUNDATION REPORT

MTRP CAC report: CAC Chair Dorothy Leonard reported that there were no action items on the Task Force agenda with required recommendations from the CAC. At the July 2010 meeting, the CAC made a recommendation to the Development Services Department in support of Site Development Permits for T-Mobile and Sprint/Clearwire (located adjacent to the Sycamore Landfill), with the final color selection for the antennas to be approved by the Senior Park Ranger. The CAC believes the permits with conditions included are consistent with the Mission Trails Design District Ordinance.

MTRP Foundation report: Leonard introduced the Foundation's Administrative Assistant Roland Roberge who is using an iPad to record the meeting and take meeting notes. The tape recorder used by Ranger Thompson is no longer working properly and consideration is being given to getting an iPad which can link meeting notes to the recording. The latest MTRP newsletter, in a new format and printed in color, was handed out to the Task Force members and others in attendance.

## WATER DEPARTMENT

Lakes Program Supervisor Nelson Manville presented a comprehensive report on Lake Murray, including change of gate entrance times to open at 5:30AM and close at 8:00PM. Nelson reported that the baseball activities are in full swing at the San Carlos recreation center fields. Recent Lake Murray activities included: April 24<sup>th</sup> Rotary Club reroofing the structures that supports the large barbecue built by the Kiwanis many years ago and the picnic table covers in Sycamore Grove. April 25<sup>th</sup> Cub Scouts completed a project of mounting four fishing string recycling bins which they will maintain for two years, recycling the string. Other notable projects included major cleanups, graffiti removal, painting of picnic tables, removal of invasive plants, trimming and/or removal of palms after unknown arsons tried to burn the fronds and other park structures. Palms were checked for the presence of raptors, as well as pigeons and rats.

Fishing is generally good for bass with some large females (12lb) being released. Trout plants from the Department of Fish and Game are ongoing, with the last major stocking in April. Water temperature is around 71 degrees, and the bass spawn has produced many fry (baby bass).

The launch ramp is operative, however the reservoir is being lowered by a couple of feet to facilitate repairs to the sink hole in the maintenance road near the San Carlos arm of the lake. Lowering lake levels will also allow for the drying and compaction of exposed soils improving the effectiveness of the run-off areas. Road work is scheduled from June 8<sup>th</sup> to July 9<sup>th</sup> at San Carlos Bay. Nelson met with environmental staff to evaluate the location of a possible bypass trail to reduce conflicts from Lake Murray patrons and active maintenance worksites. Other activities included an off-site evaluation of new culverts to be installed, fire control / weed abatement where needed, extensive repairs of the entrance causeway to the primary dock, and clean-out of the four mile diversion ditch. Nelson reported on the completion of the last four wood duck boxes located near the lake spillway, including the installation of new nesting material. The boxes are being used by wood ducks with the expectation of many new ducklings this year. The 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration at Lake Murray was, once more, a great success. As always, because of potential for fires, staff and SDFD monitored the fireworks display. Everything went as planned, and there were no incidents. Nelson also reported that the boat rental concession was no longer renting boats, however, private boats that met Lake Murray regulations were allowed.

## CITY OF SANTEE COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

City of Santee Councilmember Brian Jones introduce the new Community Services Director, Bill Maertz, who will be the new point of contact with the City of San Diego. As the Community Services Director for the City of Santee, Mr. Maertz is in charge of both Park and Recreation and Visitor Services. Bill introduced himself to the Task Force, providing his background, previously working as a Park Administrator in Minnesota, for 20 years. The last 10 years he worked as a Director near the City of Elk River, a suburb near Minnesota. His experience includes work on Park and Recreation infrastructure, including work on a regional trail project, and as a faculty administrator of a graduate program. He is looking forward to working with the Task Force. City of San Diego Councilmember Marti Emerald offered a cordial welcome, also looking forward to this new partnership, and working with Mr. Maertz.

## STAFF REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Senior Ranger Thompson reported that three of the four culverts at the Kumeyaay Lake outfall had been cleared by hand with volunteers and staff and water levels are dropping. The work location was surveyed for possible nesting sites by Open Space biologist Betsy Miller, with potential sites flagged and avoided during the project, and monitored by Laura Ball. Sr. Ranger Thompson reported on the proposed project work on the Cowles Mountain Trail, and that with help from SDFD air units, repair materials could be staged closer to actual work sites. Because we are still in the high fire danger time frame, aerial material lifts will not take place until we are past the fire season. It is hoped that work can start in early winter. Rick reported that he now has good maps to verify information for the Cowles summit panoramic panels. Once azimuths are plotted he will go to the summit to confirm identified points of interest shown on the panel. It may be possible to make minor changes to the existing panel, but if points are not accurate it may require a new panorama panel. Sr. Ranger Thompson reported that the City and MTRP Foundation are looking into interpretive panels to be installed at the new vernal pool sites created by the San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA) in the Fortuna area of the park. SDCWA has agreed to help with this project and we are now waiting on cost estimates. Mosquito trapping and larvacide drops continue at Kumeyaay Lake. It is hoped that with the ability to lower lake levels mosquito breeding can be controlled. New FY 2011 contracts are being processed for contract labor on various park projects. SDCWA is wrapping up the first phase of the work on the water delivery project in the park. Sr. Ranger Thompson and Ranger Naidas have been directing crews grading roads affected by Water Authority work. The work completed to date is excellent and should minimize erosion next winter.

Sr. Ranger Thompson reported on recent meetings with SDFD, Station 34, and the incident/accident response issues identified by FD Captain Wilson. In response to a report of poor communication and subsequent increase in rescue time, Sr. Ranger Thompson met with Captain Wilson (Station 34) to discuss ways to improve response times. This has been a common issue that has been resolved many times over the last decade. Field Rangers have Fire Pagers, and will respond (if on-duty) to get pertinent information and provide direction to rescue units. The process has been improved multiple times over the years, with detailed maps showing trails, roads, entry points, helicopter landing sites, and other important information. Ranger Naidas has done a Dispatch Training for SDFD within the last year. Questions to be asked by Dispatch (if no Ranger is available), grid maps, and landing zones were subjects of training. Apparently, due to changes in staffing, this training needs to be re-initiated. New maps have been printed, and a “triage” of dispatch questions is being created to improve response time. Additionally, signage asking visitors to always be aware of their location, as they may need to provide information, are being designed. Discussions with Captain Wilson will continue with City staff to try and resolve any remaining issues. Specialized signage that is not consistent with other jurisdictions may create more problems and is not advised.

CAC representative and retired SDPD Officer Dale Shockley introduced SDPD Lt. Ken Steward and SDPD, Sgt. Jeff Napier as the area representatives for the Mission Trails area (Eastern Division). Dale provided a detailed summary of how these emergency response issues had been resolved in the past and how successful the program had become. This response protocol had been brought to council by Brian Fennessey and Captain Ketchum and SDPD to institute effective protocol. Dale said that by reinstating certain emergency protocol the response issues could be resolved and response times improved. Fire copter “Able” just flew the landing zones and only one needed minor brush clearing, but all other zones were in excellent condition. Dale said the best protocol to manage

four Divisions of Battalions and other Fire Rescue services would be best served, as in the past, with a SDPD as an incident commander to coordinate rescue operations. SDPD, Lt. Ken Steward also expressed his confidence in the efforts to re-institute these procedures.

SDFD will be doing workshop training at MTRP on July 22<sup>nd</sup> and staff will present and discuss options to improve response times and improve the overall ability to locate victims. It should be noted that MTRP Staff have always worked to fine-tune the best response protocol and that only recently have been made aware of perceived deficiencies. It is proposed that by working closely together SDFD, SDPD and MTRP ranger staff can improve emergency response time significantly.

### ACTION ITEMS

None

### INFORMATION ITEMS

301. San Diego County Water Authority Projects: SDCWA Staff  
Mojgan Poursadighi, Project manager for SDCWA, reported on the current status of the SDCWA *Phase 1* Mission Trails Tunnel Project. SDCWA has been working with Ranger staff to insure all work completed for this phase will leave the Park in as good or better condition than before the work began. Work on completing final closure of the South Portal is nearly done, and hydroseeding will be done when complete. Mojgan reported that the shade structure and picnic table installation have been completed and many areas are almost ready for hydroseeding. The North Portal is undergoing pressure testing and should be completed by the end of next week. This site will be filled, graded, and hydroseeded. Vacating the end of Claremont Mesa Blvd staging area, including trailers and other facilities, should be accomplished by the end of Oct. / Nov. 2010, and this part of the Park will be open to the public until *Phase 2* begins. Vernal pools have been created and are doing well, although they have not been populated with flora and fauna. Establishment of viable populations of plants and animals will take place after it is determined that vernal pools have “taken” (successful in holding water needed to support life). Leonard reported that the MTRP CAC is planning a field trip to the mitigation site during the first quarter of 2011. Task Force members are also invited to attend.
302. Stowe Trail Acquisition Update – Brian Jones:  
City of Santee Councilmember Brian Jones recently talked to County Supervisor, Diane Jacob. There has been a change of command at MCAS Miramar, and recent discussions with the new commander of MCAS Miramar are not going well. The Commander is not enthusiastic about the proposed land transfer but is hopeful that once other issues are resolved (landfill/methane) discussions on the Stowe trail may resume. Councilmember Emerald confirmed this based on her conversations with the Commander.
303. CIP Project updates
  - a. MTRP Master Plan and Resource Management Plan update – Rick Thompson for Jeff Harkness

Rick Thompson reported on the current status of the MTRP Master Plan update and the concurrent Natural Resource Management Plan (NRMP). Delays are the result of the expansion of the NRMP to include additional lands. This was to go before City Council and the Natural Resource Committee (NRC) in July for contract changes related to increased consultant costs. The increased costs were the result of the inclusion of lands acquired by the City in East Elliot and the pending transfer of lands from the McMillin Rancho Encantada project. Donna Frye asked about connections, including trails, wetlands, and other natural habitat. Donna also expressed her concerns for comprehensive resource management, with special concerns to issues such as biodiversity and connectivity, consistent with all City planning documents (community plans, master plans, S.D. River Plan, etc.) This MTRP Master Plan update will not be going before Council or the NRC anytime soon (2 years out). There is nothing substantial to bring before Council or take action on at this time. Chris Zirkle provided more information on the trails master plan, as a part of the general plan (“General Plan Amendments”) including comprehensive coverage of all concerns. Chris informed the Task Force that Stacey LoMedico is in support of Natural Resource Management Plans to be concurrent with other Master Planning Documents. One of Stacey’s goals is to have a Park General Plan that will include Natural Resource Plans and the Trails Master Plan. The goal is to ultimately have all completed as one comprehensive Park Master Plan

Old Mission Dam Maintenance Project – Dorothy Leonard for Jeanette DeAngelis  
Dorothy expanded on work Jeanette DeAngelis is currently working on to move this project forward, including completion on mitigation work required. Currently, there is mitigation work being completed upriver, adjacent to Carlton Oaks Golf Course. Removal of biomass material accumulated over the last year will require restarting the removal process (including tuber material from arundo). This work was delayed by over a year, and created extensive new work to clear the floodplain. Urban Corps is currently working on the mitigation site removing invasive vegetation, barring conflicts with Carlton Oaks events. Chris explained that land belonging to the Enterprise Fund would need to be compensated using the general fund for acquisition of wetlands as mitigation. Dorothy reported that Jeanette anticipated that installation of irrigation was imminent and that native plants should be mid August, barring problems. Jeanette should be ready to report at the next CAC meeting.

Equestrian Staging Area Comfort Station:

The ad hoc committee has been meeting with consultants, and (with minor changes) has approved 100% drawings. The 100% drawings will be ready to submit to the CAC at the September meeting. It is anticipated that construction could begin in April 2011, however, MTRP Foundation representatives would prefer that it be held off until after the May 21, 2011 Explore Mission Trails Day.

304. Status report on the transfer of the future West Sycamore area of MTRP from McMillin Land Development to the City of San Diego – Zirkle

Chris reported there is nothing new to report, and the issues have been routed through the City Attorney’s Office, and these issues are McMillin’s responsibility. Marti Emerald

indicated that during discussions with Jeff Brazel he reported that all issues have been resolved with the City. This includes the outstanding encroachment issue on the north side of Sycamore Canyon Road. Other issues discussed were SDG&E's plan to use West Sycamore land as a lay-down for the Sunrise project and that money generated from this activity could/should be used to complete previously agreed upon commitments made by McMillin. City staff reported that the City will not accept the transfer of this land until the encroachments are resolved and there is little progress at this time. Marti recommended that this be placed on the next CAC agenda for discussion. Ms. Emerald once more informed the Task Force that Jeff Brazel had indicated all issues were resolved and that transferring funds to the City of San Diego to complete all work is preferred by McMillin. Chris Zirkle indicated that the City is using Lane MacKenzie in the Real Estate Assets Department as point of contact for all McMillin issues. Marti Emerald said that delays on the SDG&E Sunrise project should be used to move forward where possible on all outstanding issues.

#### ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:49 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Thompson  
Senior Park Ranger  
Staff Representative

Next meeting: September 16, 2010 @ 12:15 p.m.

Location: Mission Trails Regional Park Visitor Center, One Father Junipero Serra Trail, San Diego  
California 92119