

**Sierra Club Santa Cruz Group Executive Committee
Meeting Minutes, July 12, 2017
6:30 PM – 8:30 PM, Louden Nelson, Santa Cruz, CA**

Called to Order 7:07

Attending: Gillian Greensite, Rick Longinotti, Jane Mio, Ron Pomerantz, Erica Stanojevic
Morgan Eguia, Mary Odegaard, Steve Bakaley, Deb Molina

Online Votes

Motion to send letter regarding trails in Pogonip to city Parks Commission passed on June 1st

Welcome – Member comments

Approval of Minutes

- May Minutes - Ron motions to approve; Jane seconds; unanimous

Treasurer's Report (Mary)

From March appeal - in the green, donations well exceeded cost of putting out flyers

Communication with chapter still challenging

Membership up to 4,000 - So we should be getting more money from chapter

Gillian suggests that we communicate formally with chapter - either from Trician or Greg

Ron moves that Mary and Trician write a letter for the chair to sign regarding the matter; Gillian seconds, unanimous

Conservation Committee (Gillian)

Bird School Project (Jane)

A group that teaches children in schools about birds and how to observe and learn about them

Erica motions that we support them with \$500 with a brief proposal about how the money would be used and support them with a letter; Rick seconds; Gillian wants know what the money would be spent on. Ron would generally like the organizers to come to the meeting themselves

Jessie Street Marsh Update (Erica)

Erica will contact Gary Patton and ask him about a cost estimate; and ask Rachel to work with me

Cowell Water Quality Testing

Now on number 3 on beach bumper list; bacteria level has dropped by half; city is attributing it to bird netting; Gillian is cautious and is concerned that there are other variables

City has not done DNA testing on this season's elevated samples; Gillian proposes that we do some DNA testing ourselves to determine if the bacteria is caused primarily by birds, people, or dogs

Rick makes a motion that we spend up to \$800 to do initial tests; Jane seconds
Ron objects as he feels the cost is too high, especially in light of how much we are considering spending at this particular meeting

Rick amends his motion and says to \$400; Jane seconds; unanimous

Rick suggests that in the future to consider collaborating with other groups to do more testing if necessary (for example Surfrider)

Mountain Bike Trail Proposals / MBOSC / Parks Commission

Parks commission was somewhat divided on this issue and so formed a subcommittee - info will come back to the commission - final draft goes to Parks Commission on September 12th

Ohlone Trail Reroute Opportunity in Pogonip

City wants to reroute Ohlone trail; currently pedestrian only; would remain pedestrian only. It is used illegally by mountain bikers

Steve Bakaley, associated with SF Bay Chapter, recalled how they had similar issues and did think they had an ally (with mountain bikers) with conservation in many areas; their activities committee voted to collaborate with trail maintenance in a park; at a subsequent SF Bay Chapter excom meeting it was packed with people who were anti-mountain bikers and the Chapter rescinded their cooperation

He suggests that trail maintenance is an opportunity; over the hill they have an active adversary now in the mountain biking group and they are much more organized and are meeting with all the county supervisors and state parks commission and such while the Sierra Club is still arguing about the issue

He suggests that the Sierra Club won't be sullied by association with mountain bikers - it may be better to not have an active adversary and that the positive may outweigh the negatives

Jane called State Parks Public Safety Superintendent Bill Wolcott, who is concerned with safety issues on trails - he does get more calls regarding mountain bikers; he also does report damage from mountain bikers especially when it is wet. Their policy is to have their in-house biologists review the land and decommission trails when the trails are too badly damaged. State Parks restores the trails & surrounding area. Trails are either opened up again or left decommissioned according to evaluation.

Jane is concerned that the re-route may actually damage more land & that area should get evaluated by biologists prior building any type of new trails.

Gillian is against new trails - current ones are historic - wagon trails or people walking (not trails from native peoples) - and also would be concerned about a re-route damaging more land

Steve suggests that we treat this issue as a trail issue, not a mountain biking issue

Erica suggests asking the city why the rerouting is being done - is it biologically advantageous?

Gillian suggests we go there and look at the trail and the reroute and gain knowledge ourselves about the specific area

Steve questions what the split is between bikers - those who have environmental concerns and those who are really only there for the thrill. Jane suggests a 1 out of 20 ratio

Rick says perhaps we can collaborate regarding a trail and place some boundaries with the mountain biking group - for example ask them not to refer to us

Gillian notes that there are no mentions of the damage of erosion that mountain bikers cause on their website

Erica suggests we ask them two things: 1) to go on a hike with us and 2) to place information regarding the environment directly on their website

Jane suggests this may be too messy - there are other things to talk about first & to address one topic @ a time.

Rick will communicate with the MBOSC questions about why the trail is being rerouted

Rail/Trail

Deb Malena - rode bike from Capitola to Cowells; was an unsafe route and wants children and pedestrians to have a safe route to bike separate from traffic. She wants a green corridor that provides active transportation. Concerned about trees being cut down; a wall being built preventing wildlife from traveling. With most people she's talked to are more supportive of trail only than a rail/trail combo. She sees an opportunity to have a beautiful trail which may be lost.

Gillian and Erica feel both sides of the issue

Rick notes that we have a serious transportation problem which we need to solve; having a primarily recreation trail will not solve these issues and that needs to be attended to

Next Conservation Meeting: July 26th, 6:30-8:30, Loudon Nelson

Events and Outreach Committee (Nikki/Morgan)

- Still need an Outreach Committee Chair

- Report from Outreach Coordinator (Morgan)

- Upcoming Events

o July 20, “What’s Happening on the San Lorenzo River” – Coastal Watershed Council Board

Member Greg Larson and Outreach Staff Lorrie Egan (approved)

o Date TBD likely fall, “Before the Flood” movie (approved)

o November 16, Leonie Sherman, tentative “Bicycling around Iceland”

o January 18, Donna and Peter Thomas “Following John Muirs walk from SF to Yosemite”

- Proposed Events (need approval) - not able to approve as no quorum at this point

o September 21st, “Treasured Lands” slideshow:

QT (Tuan) Luong has spent 23 years photographing all 59 National Parks using a 5X7 large format camera. He is an amazing outdoorsman often traveling deep in the wilderness, for up to a week at a time, carrying a 70lb backpack. I’m sure he will have good stories to tell besides his beautiful photos.

- Next Meeting – tbd

Transportation Committee (Jack)

- Next Meeting – tbd

Adjourned at 8:40