



Parks and Recreation Commission
November 1, 2007

AGENDA ITEM 9

DEPARTMENT OF
PARKS AND RECREATION

CITY OF SACRAMENTO
CALIFORNIA

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Park Planning & Development
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October 23, 2007

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Parks and Recreation Commission
Sacramento, California

Honorable Members in Session:

SUBJECT: Update and Representative Appointment on American River Parkway
Governance/Financing

LOCATION AND COUNCIL DISTRICT: American River Parkway
Planning Areas: 1, 6, 7, 8, 9
Council Districts: 1, 2, 3

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends nomination and approval of a Commissioner to
serve on the American River Parkway Governance/Financing
Steering Committee

CONTACT PERSON: J.P. Tindell, Park Planning and Development Manager, 808-1955

FOR COMMISSION MEETING: November 1, 2007

SUMMARY:

The City has been formally participating since early 2007 in local multi-jurisdictional efforts to explore alternatives for both governance and financing to improve management and funding of the American River Parkway (ARP). The County of Sacramento currently operates and manages the ARP, within and beyond Sacramento city limits. A steering committee comprised of both local agency staff and other stakeholder groups is in need of expansion to support anticipated future activities. Appointment of a Commission member to serve on the ARP Governance/Financing Steering Committee is recommended by staff.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Adequate funding for the maintenance and operation of the ARP is an ongoing challenge for the County of Sacramento. Starting in early 2007, the County and City (later joined by the new City of Rancho Cordova) have been meeting to address this and related issues jointly; a critical issue



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for Sacramento is to improve user safety services.

This partnership effort is called "American River Parkway Financing and Governance." Elected officials and high level agency staff have been involved (Mayor Fargo, Councilmembers Tretheway and Cohn, Ray Kerridge, Cassandra Jennings, Jim Combs, and J.P. Tindell).

Most recently, the efforts of the multi-jurisdictional team have been focused on testing the feasibility and support on the part of property owners for a potential new parcel assessment to generate additional revenues annually in support of capital improvements, maintenance and operations of the Parkway (see Attachments A-C for additional information). The results of the mail out survey are expected to be made available to the multi-jurisdictional project teams in mid-November 2007.

The teams are also considering formation of a joint powers entity for the purpose of allocating any revenues gained from the new parcel assessment within a few miles of the Parkway. Finalization of such an entity, its powers, and its structure, may be heavily contingent on the findings from the mail out survey to property owners.

The role of an appointed Sacramento Parks and Recreation Commissioner serving on the Steering Committee is to meet periodically (approximately twice a month) with agency staff and other stakeholder group representatives, and to provide input into the development of recommendations for consideration at the monthly meetings of staff with elected officials. Recently, a County Recreation and Park Commission representative has started to serve on the Steering Committee.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

The City indirectly supports financing of the ARP primarily through County property taxes. The County relies on County General Fund support for the estimated \$5M/year ARP operation (FY07/08 dollars). The findings from a series of special studies conducted by the County in the last several years articulate the needs for additional funding for the Parkway (both capital and operations and maintenance). At the same time, the County and cities bordering the Parkway do not have significant funding from existing sources to contribute to address the Parkway's needs.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Not applicable.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS:

Providing parks and recreation facilities is consistent with the City's strategic plan to achieve sustainability and liveability and to expand economic development throughout the City. The American River Parkway within the Sacramento city limits provides approximately 1,400 acres of recreational opportunity for city residents and users from far distances. It is consistent with City *Parks and Recreation Master Plan* and *General Plan* policy to support protection and enhancement of this unique and extremely valuable recreational and natural resource. The City

has also extensively supported the 2007 American River Parkway Plan Update, currently in draft form and undergoing environmental review by the County.

ESBD CONSIDERATIONS:

No goods or services are being purchased in association with this report.

Recommendation Approved:



J.P. TINDELL, M.S.
Park Planning and Development Manager

- Attachment A - Mail Out Survey Information Sheet with Parkway Map
- Attachment B - 10/5/07 News Release on Mail Out Survey
- Attachment C - Talking Points for Mail Out Survey

OFFICIAL SURVEY

American River Parkway

Information Fact Sheet

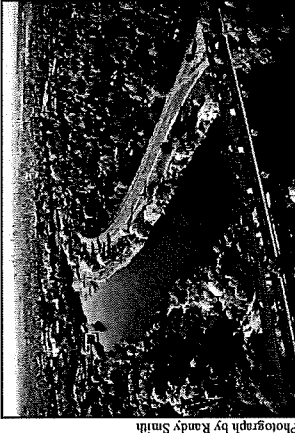


FOLSOM
CITY OF FOLSOM

Why Did You Receive This Survey?

This short survey has been sent to property owners who reside near the American River Parkway to allow them to voice their opinions about future priorities and a potential local funding measure for the Parkway.

Please read the following information and complete the enclosed brief questionnaire. Your responses will help the County of Sacramento, City of Folsom, City of Rancho Cordova, and the City of Sacramento make important decisions about the future of the American River Parkway.

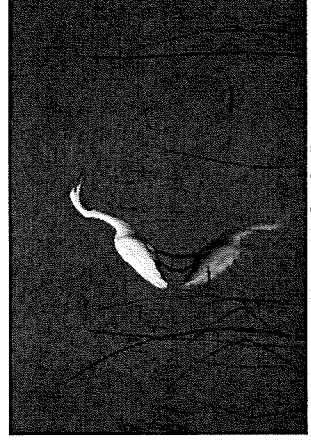


Photograph by Randy Smith



Activities available within the American River Parkway include:

- Hiking/Walking
- Swimming
- Picnicing
- Cycling
- Fishing
- Rafting and Floating
- Boating
- Running
- Nature Education
- Bird and Wildlife Viewing
- Park and Recreation Activities

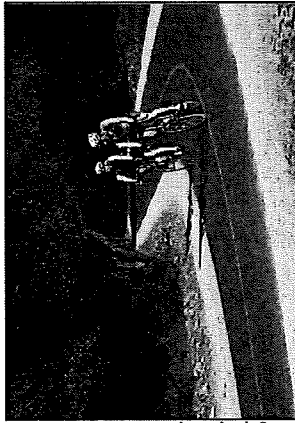


Photograph by Steve Ingalls



Photograph by Randy Smith

- Create and Maintain Trails
Renovate, enhance and properly maintain existing trails and pathways for improved public access, recreation opportunities and safety.
- Improve Safety and Security
Enhance park ranger patrols to improve the safety and security of the Parkway and to prevent vandalism.
- Preserve Water Quality
Maintain and improve natural lands along the American River that help improve and protect water quality. Also improve services to remove trash and pollution before it ends up in the American River.

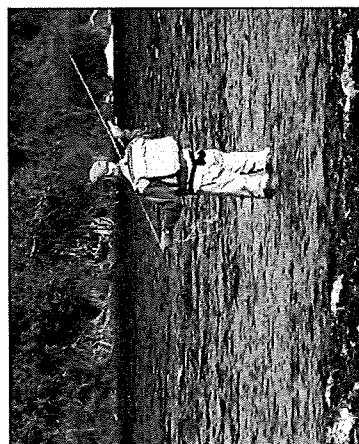


Photograph by Randy Smith

What Would a Funding Measure Provide?

Funds from a local ballot measure could be spent on a variety of local projects within the American River Parkway. The list below provides an overview of some of the projects that could be funded:

- Provide Overdue Maintenance and Repairs
Maintain and improve natural lands, recreation areas and facilities in the Parkway that have deteriorated over time due to lack of adequate funding.
- Protect Open Space, Natural Areas and Wildlife Habitat
The Parkway includes thousands of acres of open space, natural lands and important wildlife areas. A funding measure would protect, preserve and enhance these important open spaces and wildlife habitat areas.



About the American River Parkway
 The American River Parkway, which is often described as the "Jewel of Sacramento County," is a 32-mile open space greenbelt along the American River that runs from the Sacramento River to the Folsom Dam.

The Parkway encompasses over 4,600 acres of public open space, natural lands, wildlife habitat areas and parklands. It offers extensive public access and recreation areas, including miles of public trails, and many playfields and recreation areas. The Parkway also protects the American River from development and preserves the River, its waters and the lands along the River for permanent public benefit.

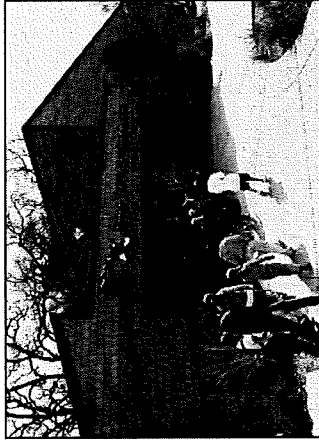


Photograph by Randy Smith

Why is a Funding Measure Being Considered?

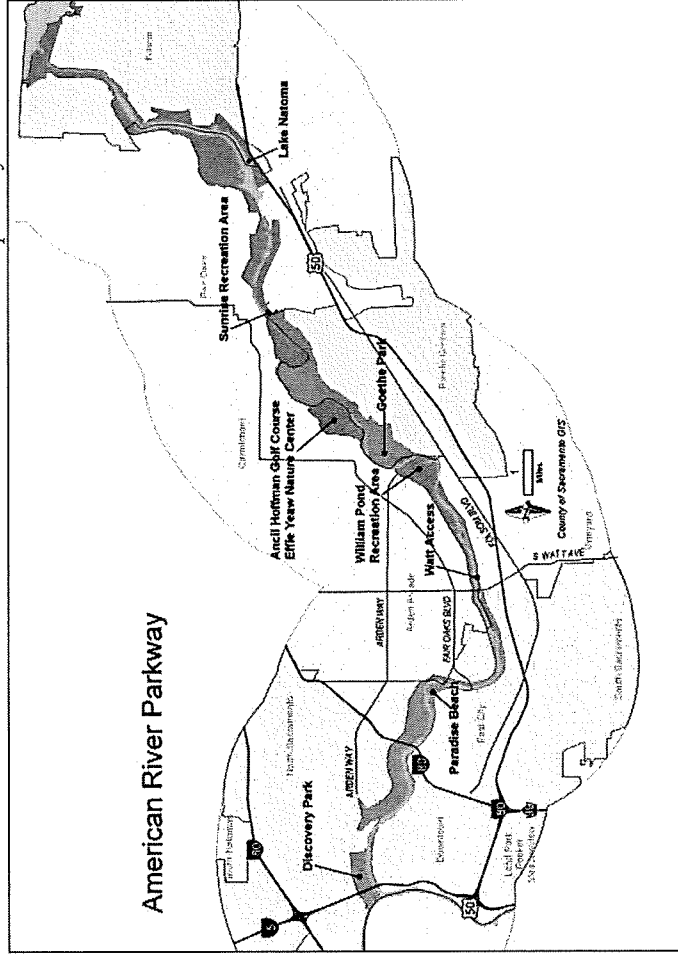
The Parkway is suffering from a lack of funding. A recent study determined that additional funds are needed to properly maintain and care for the trails, natural lands, public recreation areas and wildlife habitats in the Parkway.

A local funding measure is being considered because it would establish a permanent source of funding to improve and maintain the American River Parkway and to better protect the American River and the waters that run through the center of the Parkway.



For more information about the American River Parkway visit:

<http://www.sacparks.net/our-parks/american-river-parkway/index.html>



Recreation and Nature Areas in the American River Parkway:

- Discovery Park
- Effie Yeaw Nature Center
- Bushy Lake Nature Area
- Paradise Beach
- Tiscornia Beach
- Gristmill Dam
- William B. Pond Recreation Area
- C.M. Goethe Park
- Ancil Hoffman Park
- Rossmoor Bar
- Sacramento Bar
- S.A.R.A. Access
- Sailor Bar
- Upper and Lower Sunrise
- Mississippi Bar
- Lake Natoma

32-mile Jedediah Smith Memorial Trail



Photograph by Randy Smith



Municipal Services Agency

Department of
Regional Parks

Gary Kukkola, Director

Terry Schutten, County Executive
Paul Hahn, Agency Administrator

County of Sacramento

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 5, 2007

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County and City Leaders Seek Long-Term Parkway Funding

Survey to be Mailed Today to Gauge Property Owner Support for Benefit Assessment

Sacramento, Calif. – Approximately 20,000 property owners who live near the American River Parkway were sent a mail survey on October 5, asking if they would be willing to pay an annual benefit assessment fee to improve and maintain the Parkway.

According to a financial needs study conducted by the Dangermond Group in 2000 and updated in 2006, the American River Parkway needs an additional \$1.5 million per year to appropriately care for and maintain the trails, natural lands, public recreation areas and wildlife habitats within the Parkway.

“We are working with local leaders to develop a long-term source of supplemental funding for the American River Parkway,” said Gary Kukkola, Director of County Regional Parks. “If a measure is approved by the property owners, the funds would be spent on a variety of local projects to protect, natural areas and wildlife habitat, to create and maintain trails, preserve water quality and improve the safety and security of the Parkway.”

The survey was developed by local leaders from the County of Sacramento and the cities of Folsom, Rancho Cordova and Sacramento.

This mail-in survey is a follow-up to a phone survey conducted in April 2007 that polled 600 registered voters in the area. The survey tests a variety of fees in two zones with-in three miles of the Parkway. Results are expected to be tallied by mid-November.

For more information on the American River Parkway, visit <http://www.sacparks.net/our-parks/american-river-parkway>.

American River Parkway Benefit Assessment Survey Fact Sheet

County of Sacramento, Cities of Sacramento, Folsom, Rancho Cordova

Q: What is the survey?

- Local leaders from Sacramento County and the Cities of Folsom, Rancho Cordova and Sacramento have developed a mail survey, asking property owners who live near the American River Parkway if they would be willing to pay an annual levy to support the Parkway.
- This mail-in survey is a follow-up to a phone survey conducted in April 2007 that polled 600 registered voters in the area.
- The phone survey gathered important preliminary data about a number of wide-ranging topics concerning the Parkway. The mail survey is designed to more specifically focus on the property owners and voters who may be asked to vote on a local funding measure to raise funds to help maintain and preserve the Parkway.

Q: Who will receive the survey?

- Approximately 20,000 property owners who live near the American River Parkway.

Q: What would a funding measure provide?

A: If the survey shows support for a local funding measure and such a measure was approved by the property owners, the funds could be spent on a variety of local projects within The American River Parkway, including:

- **Provide Overdue Maintenance and Repairs**
Maintain and improve natural lands, recreation areas and facilities in the Parkway that have become deteriorated over time due to lack of adequate funding.
- **Protect Open Space, Natural Areas and-Wildlife Habitat**
The Parkway includes thousands of acres of open space, natural lands and important wildlife areas. A funding measure would protect, preserve and enhance these important open spaces and wildlife habitat areas.
- **Create and Maintain Trails**
Renovate, enhance and properly maintain existing trails and pathways for improved public access, recreation opportunities and safety.
- **Preserve Water Quality**
Maintain and improve natural lands along the American River that help improve and protect water quality. Also improve services to remove trash and pollution before it ends up in the American River.

- **Improve Safety and Security**
Enhance park ranger patrols to improve the safety and security of the Parkway and to prevent vandalism.

Q: Why is a local funding measure being considered?

A: To improve the maintenance, upkeep and safety of the Parkway and the American River.

- A financial needs study conducted by the Dangermond Group in 2000 and 2006 concluded that the American River Parkway is under-funded by \$1.5 million per year and does not have adequate funding to appropriately care for and maintain the trails, natural lands, public recreation areas and wildlife habitats in the Parkway.
- The study also found that the parkway doesn't have funding for deferred maintenance; it would need \$8.5 million of additional funding a year for the next 10 years to meet those needs.
- A local funding measure is being considered because it would establish a long-term source of funding to improve and maintain the American River Parkway and to better protect the American River.

Q: What are the next steps?

The survey will provide valuable information regarding the priorities of local residents and property owners. It will also help local leaders and elected officials make decisions about the future of the Parkway, and a potential local funding measure. After the survey has been completed, the results will be used to develop a plan for the Parkway. Based on the survey findings, a decision on a local funding measure to protect, improve and preserve the Parkway may also be made.