

Parks and Open Space FY 2010-11 Performance Plan

I. MISSION STATEMENT

Parks and Open Space is dedicated to educating, inspiring and engaging the people of Marin in the shared commitment of preserving, protecting and enriching the natural beauty of Marin's parks and open spaces, and providing recreational opportunities for the enjoyment of all generations.

II. DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The Department of Parks and Open Space consists of two divisions: the Parks and Landscape Division and the Marin County Open Space District (MCOSD).

The department is responsible for planning, acquiring, and managing the county's approximately 15,000 acres of open space and 160 miles of public trails, as well as the county's park system that includes five regional parks, eight neighborhood parks, six bike paths, and 16 landscaping areas.

Parks and Landscape Division

The Parks and Landscape Division operates and maintains over 50 separate facilities for an estimated two million visitors per year. These areas include regional and local parks, bike paths, County Service Areas (CSAs), landscape medians, playgrounds, boat ramps, beaches, sport fields, and the Civic Center campus. Staff, volunteers and seasonal staff manage these areas while providing public education and other services. County parks also host numerous public and private groups providing educational and interpretive programming for participants.

The Parks and Landscape Division includes the following programs:

- Park Planning Administration
- Park Facilities
- Landscape Services

Marin County Open Space District Division (MCOSD)

MCOSD manages over 15,000 acres of land contained within 34 Open Space preserves. Open Space preserves differ from county parks in that they are managed primarily for resource protection. District lands represent outstanding examples of Northern California environments including oak-bay woodland, oak savannah, fresh water wetlands, salt marsh, and grasslands. MCOSD's primary land stewardship activities include trail, fire road, and drain maintenance; vegetation management to reduce fire hazard; enforcement of the Open Space District Code; and reclamation and enhancement of native habitat. Visitors to district lands enjoy activities such as hiking, horseback riding, mountain bicycling, and nature study. MCOSD is a special district separate from the County of Marin and does not receive operating revenues from the county's General Fund.

The Marin County Open Space District Division includes the following programs:

- Planning and Acquisition
- Capital Improvement
- Maintenance and Operations
- Resource Management
- Environmental Education
- Volunteer Program

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III. FY 2009-10 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Initiated planning and design for the 680 Trail, a three mile shared-use trail connection between the Loma Alta and Terra Linda/Sleepy Hollow Divide Open Space Preserves
- Completed draft of the Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Plan to develop a comprehensive and strategic approach to managing vegetation resources (e.g., address reduction of fire fuel and preservation of biodiversity) on the district's preserves
- Began Phase 1 of the Road and Trail Management Plan to better address the management of the district's 200+ miles of roads and trails
- Launched new department website that will provide more online services and information for visitors to parks and open space
- Completed Black Point Boat Launch Phase II improvements
- Worked with the Department of Public Works (DPW) and County Counsel to complete repair of the McNear's Beach Park fishing pier
- Completed replacement of tide gate at McInnis Park in partnership with DPW
- Completed design, permitting and environmental review for Pueblo Park playground renovation
- Completed planning and design for accessibility improvements at Santa Venetia, McInnis, McNear's Beach, and Stafford Lake parks in partnership with DPW
- Improved conservation easement development and monitoring practices
- Completed restoration plan, design, and environmental review and permitting for Aramburu Island Restoration Project in partnership with Audubon California
- Acquired 330-acre conservation easement over the former Luiz Ranch
- Updated encroachment resolution process, developed new encroachment policies, and developed prioritized database of known encroachments
- Completed Camino Alto Fire Fuel Reduction Project
- Completed first year of Woodacre Creek Upland Habitat Improvement Project to reduce sediment contribution to salmonid-bearing streams
- Completed design and construction drawings for Phase I of the McInnis Park Master Plan Update and Creekside Park renovation consistent with the new master plan
- Assumed responsibility for coordinating the county's Integrated Pest Management program
- Completed Phase II slope repair of major encroachment on Blithedale Summit Open Space Preserve
- Completed design for irrigation improvements at Stafford Lake Park
- Completed pavement repair projects at Paradise Park and Manuel T. Freitas Bike Path
- Completed bank restoration projects on Miller Creek at Terra Linda/Sleepy Hollow Open Space Preserve

IV. GOALS AND KEY INITIATIVES FOR FY 2010-11

Goal 1: Protect and restore our lands

Please indicate how goal reflects one of the department's highest priorities and aligns with Countywide Goals and Priorities

This goal is aligned with the countywide goal of environmental preservation. Good stewardship of the department's parks and open space lands is essential to provide the same benefits - clean weather,

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healthy habitats, and healthy recreational opportunities - to future generations as they do to the generation today.

FY 2010-11 Key Initiatives

1. Prepare implementation plan and conduct environmental review for Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Plan
2. Initiate Kent Island Habitat Restoration Project
3. Implement second year of sediment reduction improvements associated with Woodacre Creek Upland Habitat Improvement Project
4. Complete Aramburu Island Restoration Project

Goal 2: Grow and link the county's system of parks, trails, and protected lands

Please indicate how goal reflects one of the department's highest priorities and aligns with Countywide Goals and Priorities

This goal aligns with the countywide goal of environmental preservation and healthy communities. Although the Open Space District has acquired over 15,000 acres and assisted in the preservation of hundreds more, the Countywide Plan targets an additional 15,000 acres for preservation. In addition, many gaps still exist in the countywide trail system.

FY 2010-11 Key Initiatives

1. Complete Phase I of the Road and Trail Management Plan and initiate Phase II
2. Complete design, environmental review construction drawings, and maintenance plan for mountain bike park at Stafford Lake Park

Goal 3: Foster discovery, learning and stewardship

Please indicate how goal reflects one of the department's highest priorities and aligns with Countywide Goals and Priorities

This goal aligns with the countywide goal of community participation. Engaging volunteers in the stewardship of open space accomplishes essential maintenance and habitat reclamation work, brings communities together and provides community members with a sense of ownership of their parks and open space.

FY 2010-11 Key Initiatives

1. Engage volunteers from all trail user groups in construction of the 680 Trail
2. Engage volunteers in funding and construction of a mountain bicycle park at Stafford Lake

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Goal 4: Connect communities with the land for recreation and health

Please indicate how goal reflects one of the department's highest priorities and aligns with Countywide Goals and Priorities

This goal aligns with the countywide goal of healthy communities. This goal is about renovating county parks, facilitating access to the county's parks and open space lands, and encouraging their use so people can get and stay healthy by enjoying the many recreational opportunities they offer.

FY 2010-11 Key Initiatives

1. Complete Creekside Park Renovation Project
2. Complete Pueblo Park Playground Renovation Project

Goal 5: Promote fiscally-responsible practices to meet the department's financial needs

Please indicate how goal reflects one of the department's highest priorities and aligns with Countywide Goals and Priorities

This goal aligns with the countywide goal of financial responsibility. The current economic climate requires the department to conduct a thorough examination of its programs, services, and ways of doing business, and to make well informed organizational changes so that it can continue to provide high quality public services.

FY 2010-11 Key Initiatives

1. Implement fee increases for county parks and the Open Space District
2. Explore feasibility of creating new County Service Areas, community facilities districts and partnerships with private businesses to generate new revenues
3. Explore feasibility of transferring ownership of some department lands to other public agencies

V. KEY CHALLENGES AND ISSUES

- Budget and staffing reductions will result in temporary park closures, reduction in maintenance levels, and potential loss of investment in improvements such as landscaping
- Having limited opportunities to convey department lands and facilities to other public agencies for them to manage and operate due to budget reductions at other agencies
- Implementing major stewardship projects, such as habitat enhancement and erosion control projects, unless they are at least partially grant funded given budget reductions and constraints
- Eliminating Open Space District contract services for enforcement and seasonal land stewardship tasks that will result in less annual fire fuel reduction work and less educational and enforcement contacts with open space visitors

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VI. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

PROGRAM 1: PARK PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Park Planning Program is responsible for development of the county's regional park system as well as the county's multi-use paths and community and neighborhood parks throughout Marin. The staff team manages preparation of park master plans, plans for park facility renovations (including playgrounds, sports facilities, boat launches, walkways and landscape areas) and county landscape areas. Staff designs and prepares construction documents for many projects. It also administers grants, professional service and construction contracts, and directs planning-related work within county parks and County Service Areas.

Administration consists of the department's senior management team (i.e., a director and two deputy directors) and an administrative services team. The latter provides various financial and administrative services for the department, such as customer service, park reservations, program information, accounting, payroll, budget preparation, personnel and clerical services.

FY 2010-11 PROGRAM INITIATIVES

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Please add up to 5 (five) key program initiatives below for FY 2010-11.

FY 2010-11 Program Initiatives
1. Work with Homestead Valley community to implement projects funded by successful ballot measure (Measure A)
2. Develop department donation policy

PROGRAM 2: PARK FACILITIES

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This program maintains and operates the county's four regional parks (McInnis Park, McNear's Beach Park, Paradise Beach Park, Stafford Lake Park) and smaller community parks in unincorporated areas, including beaches, bikeways, fishing piers, a swimming pool, boat launch facilities, group picnic areas, a marine reserve, playgrounds, soccer and softball fields, and other facilities. Additional program responsibilities include developing, evaluating and revising maintenance programs; planning, scheduling and supervising maintenance work; code enforcement including issuing citations; natural resource management; assisting the Probation Department with the Court Assignee Program; and providing technical assistance to other departments.

FY 2010-11 PROGRAM INITIATIVES

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Please add up to 5 (five) key program initiatives below for FY 2010-11.

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FY 2010-11 Program Initiatives

1. Hold two new revenue-generating special events at Stafford Lake Park
2. Open new revenue-generating picnic sites at McNear's Beach Park, Stafford Lake Park and Paradise Beach Park

PROGRAM 3: LANDSCAPE SERVICES

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Landscape Services program operates and maintains the Civic Center and Lagoon Park, six local parks and approximately 15 landscaped areas, bike paths, County Service Areas (CSAs), landscape medians, and playgrounds. Permanent staff, volunteers and seasonal staff manage these areas while providing public education and other services.

FY 2010-11 PROGRAM INITIATIVES

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Please add up to 5 (five) key program initiatives below for FY 2010-11.

FY 2010-11 Program Initiatives

1. Implement changes in accordance with the new Integrated Pest Management Ordinance and Policy; and evaluate operations and training programs to ensure best management practices are being followed

PROGRAM 4: OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Marin County Open Space District (MCOSD) was created in 1972 as the local agency responsible for creating the county's own system of public open space. Since then, the MCOSD has acquired and manages nearly 16,000 acres of land contained within 34 open space preserves. It has also acquired conservation easements encumbering 3,134 acres. The MCOSD manages its lands primarily for resource protection and balances this with passive recreational, educational, and scientific uses of open space.

The Board of Supervisors serves as the district board. Below is a listing of the district's core programs and a summary of each program's main responsibilities:

Planning and Acquisition

Long-range open space preservation planning; land, trail, and conservation easement acquisition; planning related to the management of natural resources and public use; and reviewing planning and development proposals affecting the district's open space and trail interests

Capital Improvement

Implementing the Parks and Open Space Department's long range Capital Improvement Plan detailed in the department's Strategic Plan; developing and coordinating implementation of the

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department's annual Capital Improvement Plan; managing certain capital projects through their design development, construction document and implementation phases

Maintenance and Operations

Installing, building and maintaining facilities (including fuel breaks, drains, signs, trails and fences); managing public use of district lands by educating open space visitors and enforcing the Open Space District Code; and monitoring land conditions and natural resources

Resource Management

Preparing inventories of non-native plants, special status species, and other resources as well as developing, assembling funding for, and implementing plans for vegetation management, erosion control, non-native plant control, habitat reclamation, habitat enhancement, and other resource management activities

Environmental Education

Providing educational outings by the district's interpretive naturalist, guest naturalists and docents; preparing educational outreach materials, responding to public inquiries; and assisting with the development of resource management projects

Volunteer Program

Managing a robust volunteer program to engage the community in stewardship projects in parks and open space lands; recruiting new volunteers and retaining existing volunteers; planning and overseeing volunteer training and recognition events; overseeing volunteer subprograms; coordinating the selection of volunteer projects; and preparing and distributing volunteer information

FY 2010-11 PROGRAM INITIATIVES

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Please add up to 5 (five) key program initiatives below for FY 2010-11.

FY 2010-11 Program Initiatives
1. Continue Goatgrass Control Project - Terra Linda Ridge
2. Continue Yellow Star Thistle Control Project - Mt. Burdell
3. Initiate resolution of one high priority encroachment
4. Continue efforts related to acquisition of conservation easement to protect red legged frog habitat at Lawson's Landing

VII. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

PARK PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION

Objective: Complete 20 capital projects between 2008 to 2013

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Measures	FY 07-08 Actual	FY 08-09 Actual	FY 09-10 Estimate	FY 10-11 Estimate
Workload Measures				
Number of parks capital project designs completed	3	4	5	3
Number of parks capital projects completed	8	1	2	3
Efficiency Measures				
Number of parks capital projects completed per full time staff member	4	0.5	1	1.5
Effectiveness Measures				
Percent of parks capital projects goal completed	55%	70%	70%	85%

Story Behind Performance: A capital project is defined as a project which results in construction of a tangible asset and exceeds \$25,000. Capital projects planned for design in FY 2010-11 include Lucas Valley Petanque Courts, Stafford Lake Bike Park, and Miller Boat Launch Phase II. Capital Projects planned for construction in FY 2010-11 include McInnis Park Dog Park, Lucas Valley Petanque Courts and Miller Boat Launch Phase II. Park Planning will also be exploring the development of a master plan for Stafford Lake County Park, developing additional plans for McInnis Park based on the FY 2008-09 master plan update, coordinating parks-related capital projects and Transition Plan projects with Department of Public Works (DPW) and working with County Service Areas for park improvements and planning upcoming park projects. The department's Capital Project Program will also complete several existing parks-related projects.

PLANNING AND ACQUISITION

Objective: Complete two land and conservation easement acquisition projects between 2008 and 2013

Measures	FY 07-08 Actual	FY 08-09 Actual	FY 09-10 Estimate	FY 10-11 Estimate
Workload Measures				
Number of acquisition projects completed (all methods, including fee and easement)	9	6	4	2
Acreage of acquisition or easement projects completed	175	213	333	240
Efficiency Measures				
Average cost per acre acquired	\$800	\$483	\$3,000	\$0
Effectiveness Measures				

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Measures	FY 07-08 Actual	FY 08-09 Actual	FY 09-10 Estimate	FY 10-11 Estimate
Percent of total acreage targeted for preservation that has been preserved	52%	55%	54%	54%

Story Behind Performance: The district's annual property tax revenues are sufficient to cover only operating expenses; it is not able to allocate funds for land acquisition at the current level of funding. Nonetheless, the district is in the process of negotiating the donation of a conservation easement to protect red-legged frog habitat on the Lawson's Landing property, and the donation of an open space parcel on the Tiburon peninsula to expand the Old St. Hilary's Open Space Preserve. Regarding the former, an endowment fund would be provided by the landowner to cover the costs of easement monitoring.

The rise in the average cost per acre acquired between FY 2008-09 and FY 2009-10 is attributed to the fact that the acquisitions in FY 2008-09 were related to small, tax-defaulted properties for which the district had to pay only back taxes. The average cost per acre in FY 2009-10 reflects the full fair market value of property the district had been working to purchase.

MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS

Objective: Ensure resident satisfaction with Parks and Open Space

Measures	FY 07-08 Actual	FY 08-09 Actual	FY 09-10 Estimate	FY 10-11 Estimate
Workload Measures				
Number of open space acres maintained	15,513	15,299	15,299	15,620
Number of parks acres maintained	916	921	923	934
Efficiency Measures				
Marin County Open Space District cost per resident served	\$17.19	\$17.73	\$19.15	\$23.73
Parks cost per resident served	\$17.51	\$12.08	\$11.12	\$10.01
Effectiveness Measures				
Percentage of community survey respondents indicating they were "somewhat satisfied" or "very satisfied" with acquiring, restoring, and maintaining additional open space	78%	77%	77%	77%
Percentage of community survey respondents indicating they were "somewhat satisfied" or "very satisfied" with maintaining facilities at County parks	86%	82%	82%	82%

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Story Behind Performance: The FY 2010-11 increases in the number of parks acres maintained represents management and care of the Cal Park Tunnel multi-use pathway and right of way (9.7 acres) and the Bolinas - Olema multi-use pathway and shoulder area (1.4 acres). The change in the cost per resident is based on a department wide ten percent reduction in Net County Cost.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Objective: Reduce total acreage of target exotic and invasive species

Measures	FY 07-08 Actual	FY 08-09 Actual	FY 09-10 Estimate	FY 10-11 Estimate
Workload Measures				
Acres treated to control targeted non-native species (all treatment methods)	85	200	110	110
Efficiency Measures				
Cost per acre to control targeted non-native species	\$1,000	\$680	\$1,300	\$1,100
Effectiveness Measures				
Percentage of acres treated where targeted species were effectively controlled	5%	2%	5%	5%

Story Behind Performance: The Resource Management Program prioritizes long term vegetation management projects that target aggressive invasive weeds (approximately five percent of the total acreage where these weeds occur) where special status species are at risk. There are many acres of invasive weeds that go untreated due to inadequate budget. As is typical with this type of work, some projects are more successful than others, and as such the percentage of acres treated may not be reduced from one year to the next.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Objective: Maintain a high quality volunteer program that benefits the volunteer and Parks and Open Space facilities

Measures	FY 07-08 Actual	FY 08-09 Actual	FY 09-10 Estimate	FY 10-11 Estimate
Workload Measures				
Number of volunteer hours worked in Parks and Open Space	22,000	29,356	22,000	21,000
Efficiency Measures				

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Measures	FY 07-08 Actual	FY 08-09 Actual	FY 09-10 Estimate	FY 10-11 Estimate
Value of work performed by volunteers	\$447,920	\$669,023	\$501,380	\$478,590
Effectiveness Measures				
Percent change in number of volunteer hours worked per year	42.4%	33.4%	-25.1%	-0.1%

Story Behind Performance: The full impact of reducing 2.5 volunteer program staff to 1.5 will have been fully realized in this fiscal year. Previous budget allocations to fund a part time Volunteer Coordinator and AmeriCorps staff allowed the program to expand, but the funding has not been renewed. The numbers have steadily decreased since FY 2008-09 and should stabilize at the current level.