



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Quality, Excellence, Innovation

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June 20, 2017

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Marin County Board of Supervisors
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SUBJECT: Muir Woods Road Memorandum of Understanding,
Continuation of April 4, 2017, Update

Dear Board Members:

Accounting

RECOMMENDATION: Accept the report.

Airport

Building Maintenance

SUMMARY: On April 4, 2017, your Board received an update to the Muir Woods Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) jointly provided by Public Works staff and the National Parks Service (NPS) (attached). Representatives from the Muir Woods Community Park Association, the Surfrider Foundation, Save Our Seashore, Muir Beach advocates, and Mt. Tam Task Force provided public comments. Your Board provided feedback to staff and voted to continue the item, with direction to return in June with additional information on the reservation system, traffic, and parking issues.

Capital Projects

Certified Unified Program
Agency (CUPA)

Communications
Maintenance

DISCUSSION: Today, staff and NPS are providing additional information requested by your Board at the April 4, 2017, meeting. Attached is the April 4, 2017, Board letter providing the MOU development history and background, goals, detail phasing plan, and accomplishments to date, as well as the MOU. However, as a brief review, the National Park Service (NPS), in consultation with the County, California Department of Parks and Recreation, and other stakeholders, proposed to create a reservation system to manage demand, reduce roadside parking, improve public transit coordination, enhance parking enforcement, and improve public service announcements. This effort resulted in the MOU between the County and NPS in 2015 (approved by the County in June 2015 and NPS in December 2015)

County Garage

Disability Access

Engineering & Survey

Flood Control &
Water Resources

Land Development

Purchasing

The MOU implementation is divided into two main phases. The first two years includes the reservation system development by NPS. During this time period, road shoulder parking south of the Redwood Creek Bridge is reduced to a maximum of 80 spaces during peak periods through additional regulatory parking restrictions and physical barriers. The second phase of the MOU begins upon the initiation of NPS's reservation system and continues for the next five years, which is the end of the MOU term. It was understood that the desire to remove parking spaces along the road before the reservation system was operational could temporarily increase parking problems.

Real Estate

Reprographic Services

Road Maintenance

Stormwater Program

Transportation &
Traffic Operations

Waste Management

In anticipation of this, the County and NPS implemented a series of physical and operational improvements. These have included:

- Sheriff granting NPS authority to enforce traffic and parking regulations
- NPS increasing dedicated parking law enforcement
- County increasing parking fines as an added deterrent
- NPS using parking attendants to support law enforcement in managing traffic (in use seven days a week during peak season)

These measures have helped manage, but have not eliminated challenges. Exacerbating parking and traffic conditions on Muir Woods Road (MWR) and Frank Valley Road (FVR) in recent months was the closure of Highway 1, which also delayed the start of the Muir Woods Shuttle, and the federal hiring freeze that temporarily halted backfilling vacant NPS law enforcement positions.

Because the number of available on-street parking spaces is substantially reduced before the reservation system has been implemented, there remains a significant lack of compliance with the parking restrictions at peak visitation periods and diversion of parking to other roadside locations. NPS has improved and opened up parking on the Colon Avenue lot, but that has not fully compensated for the loss of the shoulder parking through the regulations and new bollards. Long queues have also formed periodically during peak times along MWR and FVR as some motorists look or wait for an available parking space. Parking enforcement by NPS improves the shoulder parking demand situation, but challenges will remain until the reservation system is implemented.

Public Works Traffic Division conducted informal parking observations on two Wednesdays and Saturdays during May of this year. The Muir Woods Shuttle started operating again on Saturday, May 13, running weekends and holidays, and was operating during the peak Saturday observations. Marin Transit plans to expand Muir Woods Shuttle service beginning on June 19 to operate seven days per week until the third week in August. A summary of the observations is provided in the table below.

May 2017 Parking Observations on Muir Woods and Frank Valley Roads

Date	Time	Legal Parking				Total MWR	Total FVR	Grand Total
		Legal Parking, Colon to Bridge	Legal Parking, FVR, Bridge to Kent Canyon	Illegal Parking, FVR, Bridge to Kent Canyon	Legal Parking, FVR, Santo Meadow to MP 2.81			
Wed 5/10/17	11:00 AM	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Wed 5/10/17	2:00 PM	20	0	0	20	0	0	
Sat 5/13/17	11:00 AM	31	80	12	31	106	137	
Sat 5/13/17	2:00 PM	28	80	31	28	123	151	
Wed 5/17/17	11:00 AM	8	1	0	8	1	9	
Wed 5/17/17	2:00 PM	9	5	0	9	5	14	
Sat 5/20/17	11:00 AM	32	80	6	32	117	149	
Sat 5/20/17	2:00 PM	31	80	7	31	112	143	

Note that vehicles were departing and arriving all along the 'legal' parking zone on Frank Valley Road south of the concrete bridge and 80 parked vehicles was used as a rounding factor for the area to be fully occupied. Counts in other areas are specific for

the time observed. During the course of our observations, the most significant finding is that a number of drivers are choosing to park during peak periods a long distance away from the monument entrance, south of the Kent Canyon area, in order to avoid the parking prohibitions zones. Some motorists also choose to park within the designated no parking areas, which occurs primarily on the east side of the road between the bridge and Kent Canyon. On Saturday, May 13, 2017, 18 parking tickets were issued by 2:30 p.m. by the NPS. Although the above issues were currently observed to only occur on the weekends, it is anticipated that these parking issues will occur on most summer days in conjunction with peak visitation periods for Muir Woods.

Reservation System

The MOU focuses on traffic operations, parking, and arrival management aspects of Muir Woods National Monument by creating a reservation system that reduces and caps overall parking demand and peak arrival times. NPS issued a solicitation for a vendor managed reservation system in early December 2016. A site visit was held for interested parties on January 18, 2017. Proposals were submitted to NPS on May 9, 2017. The selection process is currently underway and it is anticipated that the concession contract will be in effect by the end of November 2017, with system start up by February 2018. The NPS has begun a public outreach campaign to educate and create awareness of the requirements of the system in 2018 (see attached "post cards").

Other Infrastructure Improvements and Redwood Creek Watershed Activity

Other public meetings on various aspects of programs and proposed projects in the Redwood Creek watershed have recently occurred. The active projects by NPS or the County in the Redwood Creek watershed include (by title):

- Muir Woods Arrival Reservation System – implementation in progress
- FLAP Road Reconstruction and Bridge Replacement
- Salmon Enhancement and Pedestrian Bridge Replacement
- Muir Woods Sustainable Access Project
- Muir Woods Water/Wastewater Project
- Redwood Creek Trail/Dias Extension
- Redwood Creek Restoration at Muir Beach, Phase 5 (new bridge)

These projects will improve and reorganize parking, trails, and other arrival infrastructure to address deferred maintenance, safety, the visitor experience, and to upgrade stormwater management design. Not all of the proposed projects are fully funded. Most of the projects are under environmental review. More information on these projects is available at the NPS's Muir Woods project website.

CONCLUSIONS: Significant progress has been made regarding the MOU commitments. The County and NPS are committed to meeting future milestones, making steady progress on common goals, and reporting publicly on that progress to all interested stakeholders. The implementation of the reservation system will be a critical milestone and is expected to address the most significant parking areas in the corridor.

FISCAL IMPACT: There is no impact with this action.

REVIEWED BY:	[]	County Administrator	[X]	N/A
	[]	Department of Finance	[X]	N/A
	[]	County Counsel	[X]	N/A
	[]	Human Resources	[X]	N/A

Respectfully submitted,



Eric Steger
Assistant Director

Attachments: NPS Parking and Reservation System "Post Cards"
April 4, 2017 Board Letter on Muir Woods MOU

c: Congressman Jared Huffman, Member of Congress
Cicely Muldoon, Interim General Superintendent, GGNRA
Ryen Goering, California Department of Parks and Recreation
Robert T. Doyle, Sheriff-Coroner
Nancy Whelan, Marin Transit

