

MARIN COUNTY
PARKS
PRESERVATION · RECREATION



ANNUAL REPORT 2020–2021



From the Director



YEAR AT-A-GLANCE

\$25.7 million
TOTAL EXPENDITURES

34
PRESERVES

43
PARKS AND FACILITIES

17,900
OPEN SPACE ACRES

143
SEASONAL AND
FULL TIME EMPLOYEES

A tiny Rufous hummingbird flies thousands of miles from Alaska to Mexico twice a year, stopping over in California during spring. The inner compass of these brilliant birds holds them true to their destination, whatever challenges they face along the way. Entering the third year of a pandemic, we are all tasked with flying through turbulence while holding our course. At Parks, true north has always been caring for Marin's beautiful outdoor spaces, to support recreation and preservation for Marin residents and visitors from across the Bay Area.

Now more than ever, parks and open space support community well-being. There is science to prove it. A recent study found people who spend at least two hours a week in green spaces report better physical and psychological health. The improvement in wellness was universal, regardless of age, ethnicity, or health status. Open space and park rangers see evidence of this every day, in the faces of neighbors hiking, biking, or horseback riding on roads and trails, and in the joy of families giving children room to run across a park lawn close to home.

The constraints of the pandemic have not deterred Parks' commitment to taking care of what we have. Field staff are on the job seven days a week—maintaining roads and trails, welcoming visitors at the gatehouse, preparing picnic areas. We continue addressing deferred maintenance, advancing larger scale projects aimed at sea level rise resilience, and extending organization capabilities to help manage the risk of wildfire in a changing climate.

As we approach the ninth year of Parks Measure A, and the 50th anniversary of the Marin County Open Space District, we checked in with Marin residents using a county-wide survey. Thousands of survey responses reinforced the deep connection people in Marin have to their treasured public parks, coastal beaches, and open space lands. Whatever storms blow through, that shared connection and commitment will keep us alive to the sound of hummingbird wings. We look forward to continuing our collaboration with the Marin community, other Bay Area land managers, and fellow government agencies on taking care of what we have.

Max Korten, Director
Marin County Parks

2020–2021 Strategic Achievements



WILDFIRE RISK REDUCTION

2198 Acres treated for fire fuel reduction and invasive species control

1867 Acres grazed by livestock to reduce fire fuel

15 High priority vegetation management projects working in collaboration with Marin County Fire



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

858k Page views on the website marincountyparks.org

2700 Parks Community Survey responses

24 Public board and commission meetings



HABITAT PRESERVATION

374 Invasive plant populations removed by the Early Detection, Rapid Response team

227 Wildlife surveys for nesting, roosting, and inventory assessment

8190 Linear feet of decommissioned trail for habitat restoration

DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The multi-year COVID pandemic elevated the importance of open spaces and green places. It also **accelerated the use of digital tools** for virtual transactions, communications, and collaboration.

Like many individuals and organizations, Marin County Parks pivoted as needed to strengthen digital infrastructure. This allowed Parks to maintain quality public service, strengthen community engagement, and support public health guidance.

Digital infrastructure initiatives included:

- Migrating **board and commission meetings** to virtual or hybrid sessions, with multi-modal access as needed via digital application, audio telephone, online video stream, public television simulcast, and closed captioning.
- Releasing an **online community survey** to gather and analyze feedback from Marin residents to help guide future priorities for parks and open space.
- Investing in an upgrade to **online self-service group reservations**, designed to make it easier for visitors to reserve park picnic areas and other facilities.
- Collaborating with One Tam partners on **high tech geo-mapping** of the County's topography, physical and biotic features, diverse plant communities, and habitats to support wildfire risk reduction and other planning purposes.

OPEN DATA

Open Government Data is a philosophy that promotes transparency, accountability, research, and analysis by making government data available to all.

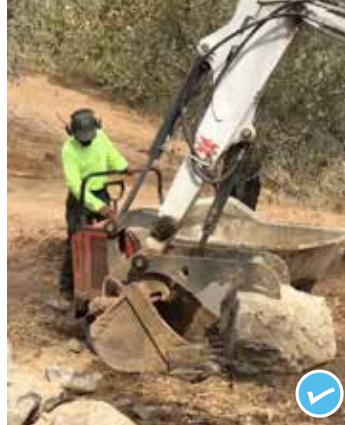
Marin County Parks participates in the **County of Marin Open Data** initiative, available online at data.marincounty.org.

This includes the **Open Data portal** with a wide range of County data sets, **Marin Compass**, **Community Indicators**, and **department specific data pages**, part of a performance management initiative designed to foster a culture of continuous improvement and learning, as well as **Marin GeoHub**, which offers geographic information.

2020–2021 Project Highlights



Close to a mile of the heavily trafficked **Mill Valley/Sausalito Pathway** near Gate 6 Road was improved with micro-resurfacing, for ease of travel and public safety.



Rush Creek Trail Improvements upgraded east side hiking and multiuse trails, improved equestrian access, and decommissioned a steep trail to restore habitat.



Puncheons were replaced in two locations on the popular **Deer Island Loop Trail** in Novato, for visitor safety and erosion control.



Over twenty **Dog Waste Stations** were installed, to tackle poo-lution at priority locations in open space preserves. Signage was designed to encourage use of the stations.



100 acres were grazed in Terra Linda/Sleepy Hollow, helping to manage mixed vegetation, maintain a fire fuel break, and maintain defensible space near homes. In recent years, Parks scientists have collected data to optimize effective use of grazing in vegetation management.



Black Point Boat Launch received a refresh, with a new metal shade structure, wood picnic tables, bait cutting table, bicycle racks, landscaping, and irrigation system.



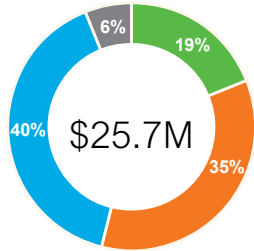
With feedback from the community, the conceptual design phase of **Evolving Shorelines** was completed. These adaptation plans, in collaboration with One Tam, aim to make the rich habitats and public access trails in Bothin Marsh Preserve resilient to sea level rise.



A multi-year initiative to study the **reintroduction of a rare clover species** (*Trifolium amoenum*) on Ring Mountain continued. This data, along with other native plant observations, is informing the management of sensitive serpentine grasslands and the rare plants that grow in serpentine soils.

FY 2020–21 Revenue & Expenditures

TOTAL EXPENDITURES BY BUDGET AREAS



- PARKS
- OPEN SPACE
- MEASURE A
- CSAs

MEASURE A OVERSIGHT

In FY 2020–21, seven committee members appointed by the Board of Supervision monitored Measure A expenditures, assisted with audits, and approved the annual report:

Robert Berner
Michael Dybeck
Larry Kennings
Joe Meylan
Mary Stompe
Dan Russell
Jeff Williams

Each year Measure A funds undergo two compliance audits. The Marin County Department of Finance audited organizations other than Marin County Parks that receive Measure A funding. Badawi and Associates audited Marin County Parks and will issue a report in February 2022. Audit reports are available on marincountyparks.org.

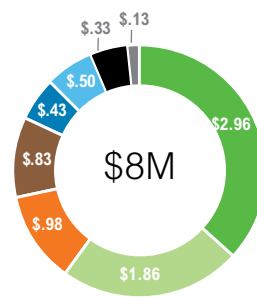
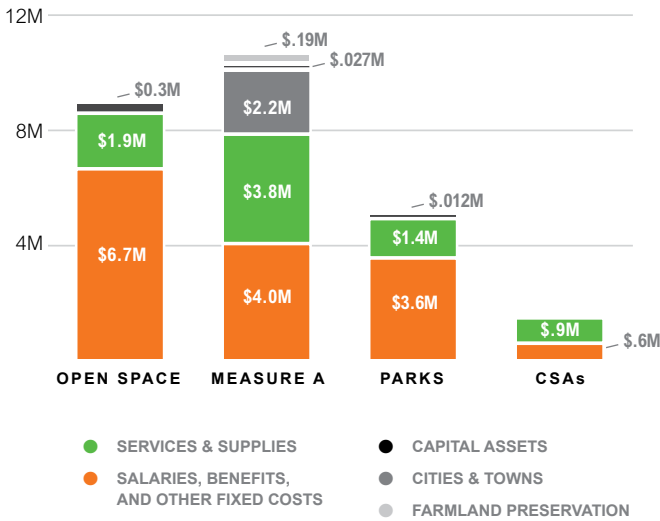
This table summarizes actual revenues and expenditures handled by Marin County Parks.

	PARKS	OPEN SPACE	MEASURE A	CSAs
REVENUE				
Taxes	0	8,823,102	15,547,563	1,975,185
From Use of Money	828,877	86,850	110,189	41,602
Intergovernmental	51,127	33,526	73,183	2,663
Charges for Services	1,713,903	(109,556)	0	(15,951)
Miscellaneous	10,609	246,465	11,025	130,000
Budgeted Transfer In	12,424	445,262	164,331	439,189
Total	2,616,940	9,525,649	15,906,291	2,572,688
EXPENDITURES				
Fixed Costs				
- Salaries and Benefits	4,649,786	5,444,494	3,583,884	0
- Budgeted Transfer Out	112,013	10,000	148,138	140,000
- Interdepartmental Charges	(1,191,053)	1,210,985	299,261	470,464
Grants				
- Other Charges and Capital Assets	12,424	313,948	27,831	0
- Farmland Preservation	0	0	192,895	0
- Cities and Towns	0	0	2,220,316	0
Services and Supplies				
- Road and Trail Management	0	807,191	18,201	0
- Vegetation Management and Fire Fuel Reduction	0	163,664	1,692,269	0
- Wetland Restoration and Erosion Control	0	27,677	472,638	0
- Real Estate and Acquisition	0	126,518	144	0
- Park Facilities and Landscape	1,281,193	0	796,524	881,505
- Public Engagement and Equity	18,420	549,657	416,224	0
- Science and Research	0	41,583	286,070	0
- Administration	65,811	211,193	153,567	0
Total	4,948,594	8,906,910	10,307,962	1,491,969
OTHER USE OF FUND BALANCE/NET COUNTY COST				
- Fund Balance		(618,739)	(5,598,329)	(1,080,719)
- General Fund	2,331,654			

FY 2020–21 Financial Information

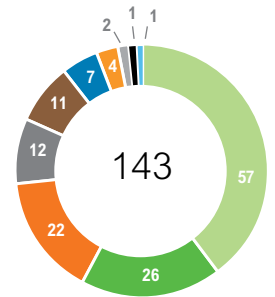
Marin County Parks Expenditures and Set Aside for Land Acquisition FY 2020–21

PARKS, OPEN SPACE, AND MEASURE A



SERVICES & SUPPLIES BY PROGRAM

- PARK FACILITIES & LANDSCAPE
- VEGETATION MANAGEMENT & FIRE FUEL REDUCTION
- PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT & EQUITY
- ROAD & TRAIL MANAGEMENT
- ADMINISTRATION
- WETLAND & EROSION CONTROL
- SCIENCE & RESEARCH
- REAL ESTATE & ACQUISITIONS

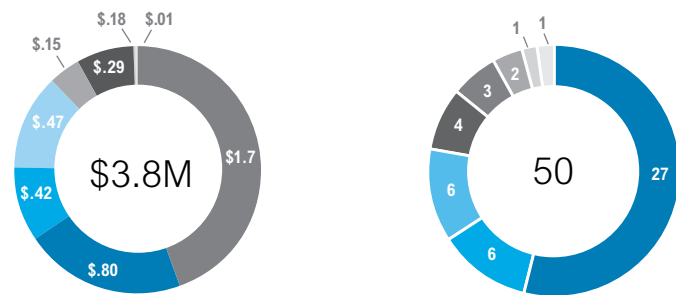


NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

- SEASONAL
- PARK FACILITIES & LANDSCAPE
- VISITOR SERVICES
- ADMINISTRATION
- ROAD & TRAIL MANAGEMENT
- NATURAL RESOURCES
- COMMUNICATIONS
- EXECUTIVES
- SCIENCE & RESEARCH
- REAL ESTATE & ACQUISITIONS

Measure A Expenditures and Set Aside for Land Acquisition FY 2020–21

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE



SERVICES & SUPPLIES BY PROGRAM

- VEGETATION MANAGEMENT & FIRE FUEL REDUCTION
- PARK FACILITIES & LANDSCAPE
- PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT & EQUITY
- SCIENCE & RESEARCH
- WETLAND RESTORATION & EROSION CONTROL
- ADMINISTRATION
- ROAD & TRAIL MANAGEMENT
- REAL ESTATE & ACQUISITIONS

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

- SEASONAL
- PARK FACILITIES & LANDSCAPE
- VISITOR SERVICES
- NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT
- ADMINISTRATION
- COMMUNICATIONS
- ROAD & TRAIL MANAGEMENT
- SCIENCE & RESEARCH

LAND ACQUISITION

In FY 2020–21, no funds were expended on land acquisition. \$2.1M was allocated to land acquisition set aside, with total set aside at the end of FY 2020–21 \$6.4M.

CITIES AND TOWNS

Marin's 19 cities, towns, and applicable special districts received \$2.3M in Measure A funds in FY 2020–21 for fire fuel vegetation management, neighborhood park renovations, maintenance, and staff.

FARMLAND PRESERVATION

Marin Resource Conservation District (RCD) receives 5% of Farmland Preservation funds to support resources on easement-protected agricultural lands. RCD matches other grants to maintain soil and water quality, water supplies, and fencing. RCD received \$145,649 in FY 2020–21.

In FY 2020–21, the Marin Agricultural Land Trust returned \$11,025 to the Farmland Preservation program.

Measure A: Caring For What We Have



52%

Parks and Open Space



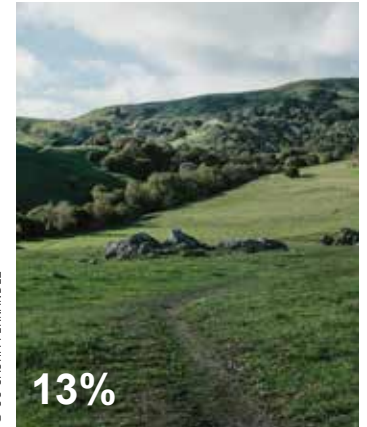
20%

Farmland Preservation



15%

Cities and Towns

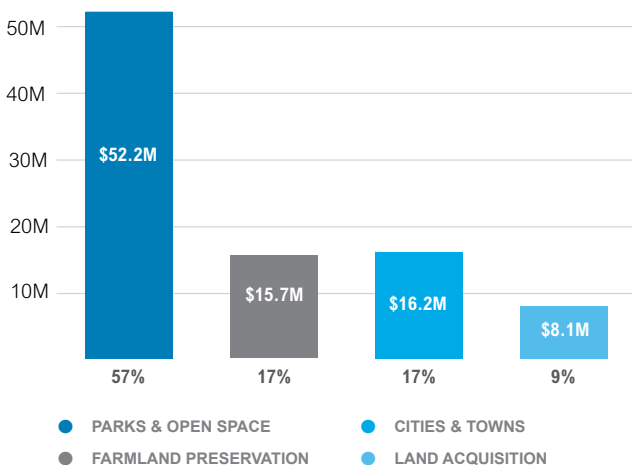


13%

Land Acquisition

Measure A protects the parks, open space, and farmland that make Marin County an extraordinary place to live, work, and play. In 2012, Marin voters approved a one-quarter of one percent sales tax (County Ordinance 3586) to support parks, open space, and agricultural lands across Marin. By law, funds raised by Measure A must be spent on parks and open space, farmland preservation, recreation in Marin's nineteen cities and towns, and land acquisition. Measure A also funds over \$100,000 annually in community grants, extending opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to enjoy parks and preserves through local non-profit organizations.

Measure A Expenditures FY 2014–21



As of FY 2020–21, Measure A has been in effect for eight years and has generated \$106.7 million. These funds are being used to address deferred maintenance in parks and preserves, finance agricultural easements that protect ranches and farms, support outdoor recreational programs in cities and towns, and help Marin adapt to climate change.

Support for Cities, Towns, and Special Districts

Measure A provides funding for parks, open space, and recreation facilities across the county. Measure A helps cities, towns, and special districts maintain parks, open space, and recreational programming. To date \$16.2M dollars have been granted for recreation in Marin cities and towns

CITIES

Mill Valley
Novato
San Rafael
Sausalito

TOWNS

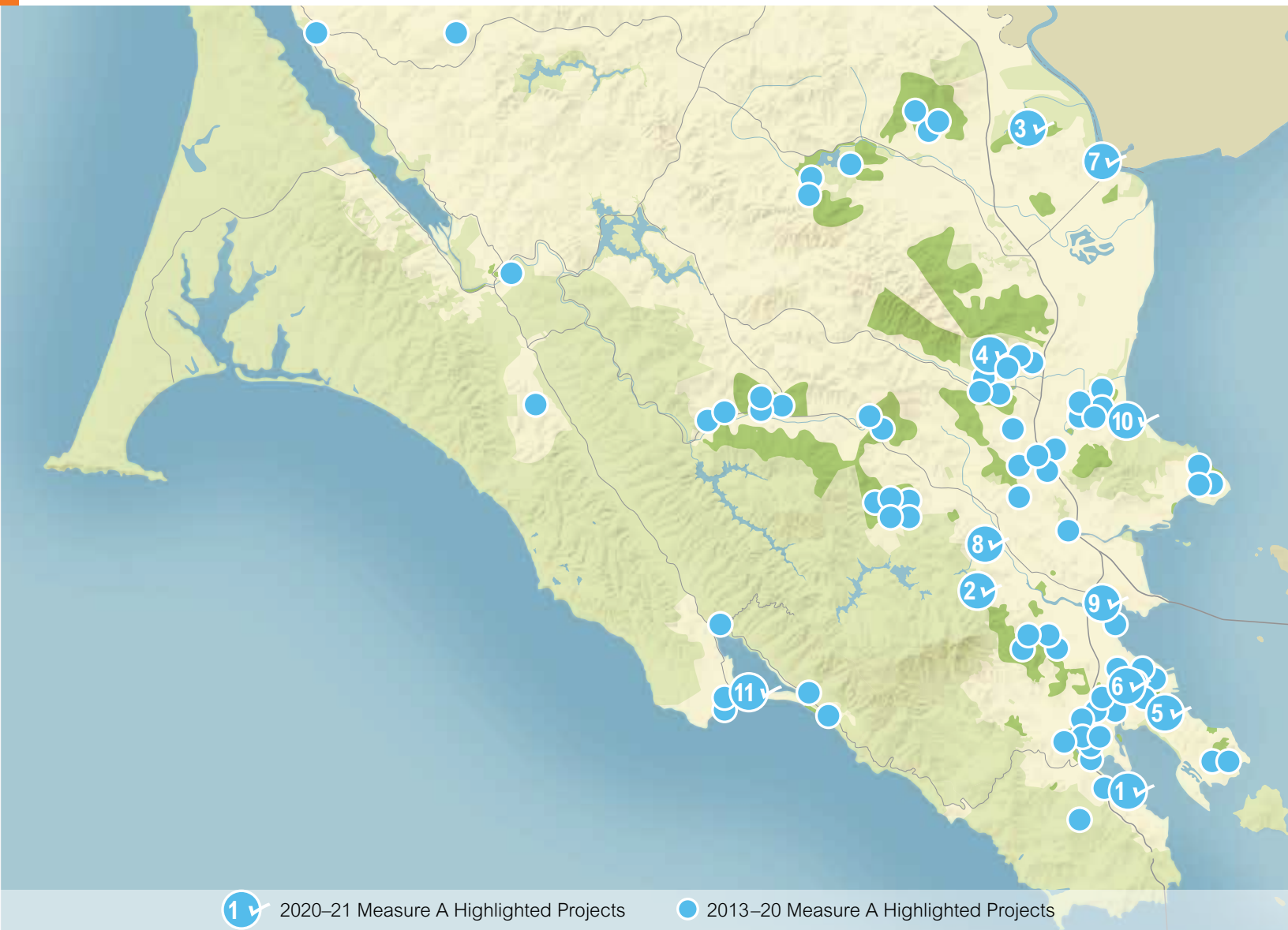
Belvedere
Corte Madera
Fairfax
Larkspur
Ross
San Anselmo
Tiburon

SPECIAL DISTRICTS

Bel Marin Keyes CSD
Bolinas Firehouse Community
Park Agency
Marin City CSD
Marinwood CSD
Muir Beach CSD
Strawberry Recreation District
Tamalpais CSD
Tomales CSD

Highlighted County-wide Projects Enhanced by Measure A

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| 1 Mill Valley Sausalito Pathway microresurfacing | 5 Region 6 road and trail designation | 9 Evolving Shorelines Bothin Marsh conceptual design completed |
| 2 Kent Woodlands vegetation management | 6 Rare clover reintroduction on Ring Mountain | 10 Buck's Landing phase 1 improvements |
| 3 Rush Creek east side trail improvements | 7 Black Point Boat Launch improvements | 11 Ocean Protection Council grant awarded for Bolinas Wye Wetlands Resiliency. |
| 4 Terra Linda/Sleepy Hollow defensible space grazing | 8 Homestead Valley Community Center pool area improvements | |



50TH ANNIVERSARY

In the late 1960s, large-scale development plans energized Marin residents to protect the natural beauty of the county. A grassroots group, People for Parks and Open Space, began advocating for a ballot measure. In 1971, the County Planning Department prepared *Can the Last Place Last? Preserving the Environmental Quality of Marin*, which offered a vision for land preservation. **On November 7, 1972, Marin voters passed ballot Measure A, creating and funding the Regional Park and Open Space District.** Spurred by the will of the voters, the Board of Supervisors then adopted a Marin Countywide Plan by a 3 to 2 vote. The plan outlined the importance of maintaining the County's exceptional recreational corridors, coastal areas, and rural agricultural lands. Check the calendar on marincountyparks.org, and join in on 50th anniversary events that will be taking place throughout the year.

