



NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF AN INITIAL STUDY

SONOMA COUNTY REGIONAL PARKS
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OCTOBER 02, 2006

The Sonoma County Regional Parks Department (Regional Parks) is preparing an Initial Study for the proposed:

TOLAY LAKE REGIONAL PARK INTERIM PUBLIC ACCESS & MANAGEMENT PLAN

Introduction

Regional Parks is requesting comments from responsible and trustee agencies, property owners in the project vicinity, and other interested parties regarding the scope and content of the Initial Study. Responsible and trustee agencies are requested to provide comments regarding the scope and content of the environmental information which is germane to that agency's statutory responsibilities in relation to the proposed project. Regional Parks is also interested in comments from property owners and other interested parties regarding what should be included in the Initial Study.

Regional Parks staff will prepare the Initial Study in accordance with the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the State CEQA Guidelines. An Initial Study is a preliminary analysis of a proposed project's potentially significant environmental effects regarding construction, operation, and maintenance of the proposed project. After the Initial Study is prepared, Regional Parks will present the document to the Sonoma County Environmental Review Committee (ERC), who will determine whether a Negative Declaration or and Environmental Impact Report should be prepared. Regional Parks provide notice of the ERC meeting after it is scheduled.

Notice of Preparation Comment Period

Please send written comments to Michelle Julene, Environmental Specialist in care of the Sonoma County Regional Parks Department, at the address listed above.

The comment period for the Notice of Preparation will close at 5:00 p.m. on November 03, 2006. Please note that while the comment period for the Notice of Preparation has a closing date, interested parties are encouraged to contact Regional Parks staff at any time during the process to receive an update of the process, to ask questions, and share information.

Scoping Meeting

The Sonoma County Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission (PRAC) will host a Scoping Meeting regarding the proposed project. The Scoping Meeting is not a required part of the CEQA process. Regional Parks staff will present available information regarding the proposed project and will discuss the planning and environmental processes associated with park development. Then, the meeting will be opened to the audience to participate in the process. Regional Parks and PRAC would like to hear from the community as well as the responsible and trustee agencies regarding support for the proposed project and regarding concerns. The Public Scoping Meeting is scheduled as follows:

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2006 @ 5:00 pm
Sonoma County Board of Supervisors Chambers
575 Administration Drive, Room 100A
Santa Rosa, CA**

Regional Parks Contact Persons

Please contact Michelle Julene at mjulene@sonoma-county.org or (707)565-3962 if you have questions regarding this Notice of Preparation.

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Purpose

The purpose of the proposed Interim Public Access and Management Plan (Interim Plan) is to provide more public access than is currently provided by the guided tours with minimal physical alteration of the property. The Interim Plan would be in place while the Master Plan and associated environmental document are being prepared and processed.

Project Location

The address listed for proposed Tolay Lake Regional Park project area is 5869 Lakeville Road.¹ Primary access is from Cannon Lane, a County-maintained road off Lakeville Road.

Existing Site Conditions

The property is characterized by rolling hills, stunning ridgelines, moist grasslands, wetlands, riparian and upland habitat, remnant stands of oak trees, and Tolay Lake, all of which provide for diverse outdoor experiences. Elevation ranges from 100 feet to nearly 800 feet above sea level. The East Ridge is a high point on the property that provides spectacular views of the Bay Area, landmarks of six adjacent counties including Mt. St. Helena, Mt. Tamalpais, Mt. Diablo, the Petaluma River basin, three San Francisco Bay area bridges, and the cities of San Francisco and Oakland.

There are abundant biological, cultural, historic, and agricultural resources upon the property. Resource studies are currently underway to evaluate and document these valued resources. Regional Parks will utilize interim reports to guide the development of the Interim Plan. There are approximately five miles of existing ranch roads that provide opportunities to establish multi-use trails for biking, hiking, and equestrian use.

Project Description

Details of the Interim Plan have not yet been developed however; the following elements have been identified. Regional Parks intends to utilize comments received in response to this Notice of Preparation and the Scoping Meeting to assist in developing the Interim Plan itself.

- ❖ Public Access
- ❖ Operations and Maintenance
- ❖ Resource Enhancement
- ❖ Programs and Special Events

Areas of Potential Environmental Effect

The Initial Study will analyze the potential environmental impacts associated with construction, operation, and maintenance of the proposed project. Specific areas of analysis will include: aesthetics, agricultural resources, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, hazards, hydrology and water quality, land use, energy and mineral resources, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation and traffic, and utilities and service systems. These are the resource categories included in the Initial Study Checklist, Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines.

PUBLICATION AND MAILING DATE: October 02, 2006

SENT TO OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND PLANNING: October 02, 2006

¹ APNs: 068-060-57, 068-060-058, 068-070-004, 068-070-005, and 068-080-001

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