

MARIPOSA COUNTY

Merced River Trail Community Working Group

MEETING MINUTES

DATE: July 20, 2022
TIME: 4:00 PM
LOCATION: TELECONFERENCE ONLY

1. CALL TO ORDER: Goralnik called the meeting to order at: 4:01 PM

Members Present: Jessica Thompson, Ralph Mendershausen, Susie Clark, Wendy Brown, Tara Fouch-Moore, Jeff Jenkins, Art Baggett, Michael Martin,

Members Absent:

Excused Absences: Rosemarie Smallcombe, Miles Menetrey

Visitors:

2. APPROVE AB 361 RESOLUTION:

This resolution was approved unanimously.

3. APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE 6/15/22 MEETING:

The minutes were unanimously passed with minor modifications.

4. DISCUSSION ON POTENTIAL UPSTREAM ROUTE ALTERNATIVES:

Art shared that he and Rosemarie would be meeting with staff from the Stanislaus National Forest to discuss the upstream route alternatives around Foresta and opportunities for acquiring right of way access to/through Miller Gulch. Goralnik offered to help prepare a meeting agenda, which would include the draft map of the potential Foresta bypass and a list of topics to discuss. He indicated he would share that with the meeting participants shortly.

5. UPDATE AND DISCUSSION ON MILLER GULCH PROPERTY:

This topic was generally covered in a discussion on Agenda Item 7 as it pertains to Action 2.3 in the Vision Plan. However, Susie Clark referenced the USFS Merced Wild and Scenic River Plan (1991; pg. 39, "Management Objectives"), which explicitly identifies pursuing property acquisition as a management objective. She suggested that Art and Rosemarie mention this to the Stanislaus National Forest staff at future meetings.

6. DISCUSSION ON VISION PLAN ACTION 8.1:

Fouch Moore asked a question about what the organization identified in that action would be in addressing over-use. Mendershausen shared that the Conservancy would function as an "eyes-on-the-trail" organization, who supports and conducts actions that respond to over-use, such as revegetation, trail work, and other mitigation activities. Baggett added that the group would be an organization that directly supports the public land managers. Fouch Moore reflected that perhaps an additional role for the organization is to serve as a liaison for the federal agencies.

Clark added that the conservancy would need to have a formal relationship, such as a Memorandum of Understanding, with the federal agencies. Goralnik suggested adding that to Core Principle #6 in

the action plan. Baggett clarified that there may be a contradiction between a group that can manage and implement the trail, and a group that might be in conflict with the land managers' actions related to resource conservation.

7. DISCUSSION ON DRAFT VISION PLAN CHAPTERS:

Martin recommended making minor changes to Action 2.3 that reflect the group's recommendation to focus on perfecting a granted right of way, or immediately acquiring an easement through the Miller Gulch parcel. Goralnik indicated that he would review these changes, make the changes discussed previously in the meeting, and make the changes that were suggested by Sue Clark and included in the comment log, at which point the draft of Chapter 3 would be complete, along with the draft of Chapter 2, which was deemed complete at a previous meeting.

There was a discussion on the draft of Chapter 1, which currently includes a significant section on the river canyon's history and will eventually include discussion of the federal, state, and local planning contexts at play for the trail. Goralnik stated that the appendices and Chapter 1, which would be distributed for initial review after the meeting and included in the August meeting packet, will be the focus of the group's review energies for the next 4-6 weeks.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT:

No public comment.

9. ADJOURN: The meeting adjourned the meeting at 5:35 PM.

Minutes Prepared by: Mikey Goralnik