

MARIPOSA COUNTY

Merced River Trail Community Working Group

MEETING MINUTES

DATE: April 4, 2022

TIME: 4:00 PM

LOCATION: DEVELOPMENT SERVICES CONFERENCE ROOM
+ TELECONFERENCE

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Goralnik called the meeting to order at: 4:03 PM

Members Present: Michael Martin, Art Baggett, Rosemarie Smallcombe, Wendy Brown, Jessica Thompson, Tara Fouch-Moore, Tom Sweeney

Members Absent: Nick Ross-Rhudy

Excused Absences: Ralph Mendershausen, Tony McDaniel, Susie Clark

Visitors:

2. **ADOPT A RESOLUTION IN ACCORDANCE WITH AB 361:**

The group adopted a resolution in accordance with AB 361, authorizing them to meet virtually in compliance with the Brown Act.

3. **APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE 2/9/22 MEETING:**

The minutes were unanimously passed.

4. **WELCOME NEW MEMBER:**

The Community Working Group welcomed Tara Fouch-Moore and Susie Clark, the group's newest members. Goralnik reminded the members that there was still one remaining vacancy.

5. **DISCUSSION ON DRAFT VISION PLAN CHAPTERS:**

The group had a lengthy discussion on the drafts of Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 of the Merced River Trail Vision Plan. Goralnik stated that Chapter 1, which deals with the canyon's history and the project's planning context and overview, was in production but not ready to share with the committee at this time—partially because some of the content had not yet been drafted, and partially because key sections were being reviewed by the Southern Sierra Miwuk Nation.

Chapter 2, which focuses on the visioning process, is intended to be a complete draft for review, and Chapter 3, which goes into greater detail for the recommended project actions, is still missing a great deal of content, including much of the narrative text for the recommendations. He clarified that this chapter was included to review as an indication of the direction that the draft document was headed in, but welcomed any preliminary comments.

Goralnik shared that CWG and other members of the community were providing content relevant to their respective expertise to support the narrative sections of several recommendations. He asked the CWG if any of the members wanted to take on any additional sections, and there were no volunteers.

Goralnik added that he anticipated a significant Appendix section(s), which might include:

- The Merced River Trail Community Benefits Study

- All or most of the raw data from the online survey
- Preliminary data from the UC-Merced // Jeff Jenkins trail survey
- Some or all of the deliverables from the EPA technical assistances received regarding Miller Gulch
- The proposed scope from Ascent Environmental for the comprehensive compliance and trail designation project

Goralnik stated that the plan was for the CWG to review, provide comments on, and support each chapter prior to the whole document going to the Board of Supervisors to adopt. He added that work would continue on the delegated sections of Chapter 3, the review of Chapter 1, and the draft production of the Appendices while staff is on paternity leave.

The CWG provided the following comments:

- Generally, they would like to have more time to review and provide comments on the drafts of Chapter 2 and Chapter 3. The members committed to having more comments to provide at the May meeting, at which time, Art Baggett hopes to have an additional alternate route to share with the CWG.
- Michael Martin noted that some actions are immediately implementable, especially on the lower portions of the trail, while some actions will take longer
- Michael Martin and Art Baggett recommended clarifying the narrative in Action 1.1 to reflect that the option of the route passing through Old El Portal and Foresta is “off the table” based on the input received through the planning process. They also recommended specifying that, in order for this decision to change in the future, it would have to be the result of a robust planning process and a formal Board of Supervisors action.
- Michael Martin suggested including an existing memo regarding the components of the FERC relicensing agreement in the appendix.

6. BYLAW UPDATES:

The group voted unanimously to adopt the mandatory bylaw update.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT:

The members reiterated their belief that the deliverables from the EPA technical assistance would need to be reviewed by the CWG prior to the members supporting further action related to the Miller Gulch site. Goralnik shared that a representative of the ownership group had reached out to notify him that the ownership group was having capacity issues and struggling to come together to formally authorize staff to share the documents (Phase I and Phase II environmental assessments, and Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives), and volunteered to meet with the CWG to discuss the findings from the reports while working toward securing formal authorization.

Goralnik mentioned that he would be making a short presentation to the Board of Supervisors at the 4/5 meeting to provide an update on the Merced River Trail project prior to going on paternity leave.

8. ADJOURN: The meeting adjourned the meeting at 5:34 PM.