

**MONTEREY PENINSULA REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT  
STAFF REPORT**

**BOARD MEETING:** May 05, 2021

**SUBJECT:** Monthly Staff Report

**PRESENTER:** Rafael Payan, General Manager

**REPORT:** The following briefly summarizes some of the key tasks and projects MPRPD's Staff undertook from mid-March 2021 through mid-April 2021 in addition to performing the District's regular business. This work was accomplished in compliance with the CDC's recommendations and the State's and County's shelter-in-place orders.

**ADMINISTRATION DIVISION**

1. **Budget:** Staff reviewed the draft Fiscal Year 2021-22 budget with the Finance Committee. The final draft will be presented to the Board for consideration in June.
2. **Cachagua Community Park Grant:** Staff provided EECO support in the development of a National Recreation and Park Association Grant by drafting letters of support and developing a concept plan to demonstrate the project's feasibility. Additional information is provided in EECO's report, below. A revised draft will be provided to the Board at a later date once this rendition has been further vetted.



**Staff-generated Concept Plan**

- 3. Certificate of Appreciation Presented to Urban Lumberjacks:** During a City Council meeting, the City of Marina and MPRPD presented certificates of appreciation to the Urban Lumberjacks for their donation of time, labor, and materials related to the enhancement of the Oak Woodland Project at Locke-Paddon Community Park.



- 4. COVID-19:** Staff continued to participate in weekly Monterey County OES COVID-19 task force meetings and carefully track the County Health Officer's orders to ensure alignment with the latest protocols. Monterey County is currently in the Orange tier, indicating a Moderate risk level.
- 5. Finance Committee Meeting:** MPRPD's Finance Committee and staff met to review the agency's draft Fiscal Year 2021-22 budget and potential financing of capital improvement projects.
- 6. FORTAG and State Route 218 Site Visit:** The cities of Monterey, Seaside and Del Rey Oaks, TAMC, Caltrans, Consultants, FORTAG's founders, and MPRPD staff toured the proposed FORTAG alignment, focusing on proposed trail sections from Frog Pond Wetland Preserve to Fremont Blvd. Various alternatives were discussed during the site visit, including the potential of tunneling under SR 218 and General



Jim Moore Blvd to provide hikers and bicyclists a car/truck/motorcycle-free experience.



**Frog Pond Section**



**Del Rey Oaks Section**

- 7. Joyce Stevens Monterey Pine Preserve (JSMPP):** Architect Stevens and staff held several meetings to plan the JSMPP Dedication Ceremony. Architect Stevens requests the ceremony be held on June 21, 2021, marking the first day of summer. The on-site event will include guest speakers, planting of native plants, and the distribution of a limited number of the *Coastal California's Living Legacy – The Monterey Pine Forest* book signed by the authors. Staff will coordinate the event with the county. COVID-related protocols will be exercised.



- 8. Laguna Grande Regional Park Joint Powers Authority (JPA):** MPRPD and the cities of Monterey and Seaside continued to work together re: holding the long-awaited JPA meeting. The session was very positive and productive. The cities and MPRPD have agreed to have hold a staff-based kick-off meeting as early as May

2021. The meeting's goals will include:

- A. Get on the same page and align with April's JPA meeting and its Board/public/staff recommendations
  - B. ID initial maintenance measures that may/can possibly be implemented soon (in advance of BFS's analysis and plan, and subsequent "large-scale" site improvements), and ID who does what/pays for what
  - C. Run the proposed initial maintenance measures by BFS, Audubon, and others to ensure we protect nesting birds, do not stymy future desired outcomes and projects, do not conflict with regulations, do not compromise future permitting processes, etc.
  - D. Schedule the next JPA meeting and report our findings and recommendations to the JPA Board for consideration and direction
  - E. As authorized/directed by the JPA Board, subsequently coordinate, and launch initial work parties/related steps, if/as appropriate
9. ***ParkIT!* and Projects A & B are Integrated:** Staff met with the *ParkIT!* initiative team and provided an update on Projects A & B (Projects). The update was very well received by the meeting's participants.

Scope items include amenities and site improvements requested by the public during numerous stakeholders and MPRPD Board meetings. MPRPD's Board previously accepted the Palo Corona Regional Park General Development Plan and authorized staff to undertake the scope items' designs. The Board also recently accepted the environmental assessment for this park and said scope items. It is anticipated that construction documents may be completed and be bid-ready as early as summer or early fall 2021. These projects have been discussed with MPRPD's Finance Committee. Because of the substantial cost to construct these approved scope items, several funding options are being explored, including the pursuit of grants. Further, due to these Projects' complexity and scale, all MPRPD Divisions and staff are involved.

Because the Rancho Canada Unit (RCU) will be one of the primary shuttle bus staging areas, Projects A & B are vital to the *ParkIT!* initiative's operation and success. Scope items include restroom facilities, staging/waiting plazas with orientation/interpretation kiosks, shuttlebus drop-offs that can also be used by school buses and Monterey-Salinas Transit patrons, secured shuttle bus storage, and

electric vehicle charging stations for park visitors, banquet concession patrons, staff, and electrically powered shuttle buses.

To align MPRPD with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) standards for the workplace, the RCU's maintenance compound and its offices shall be modified. This ensures MPRPD provides OSHA compliant workstations for its personnel and agents, including emergency washing and sanitizing facilities. These critical modifications to the maintenance building and compound will also be vital to the proposed Incident Command Center, by safely and functionally supporting multi-jurisdictional crews responding to wildfire, flood, and seismic emergencies, or social unrest.

**10. Training:** Staff participated in a performance management training presented by Liebert-Cassidy-Whitmore.

**11. Wage and Benefits Analysis:** Staff drafted the study's Request for Proposal. The Study's scope and objective is to perform an analysis of the District's employee classifications, job descriptions, compensation, and benefits to ensure competitiveness in the industry.

## **EECO DIVISION**

**1. Blue Zones:** Staff continues to engage with the Blue Zones Project of Monterey County (BZPMC) team to learn about the opportunities being brought to the Peninsula. During this reporting period, BZPMC held a Built Environment Policy Summit wherein staff participation included discussion on community priorities in building healthy environments via land use, greenways, trails, complete streets, and accessible transit, as well as networking with new community partners. This first collaborative meeting emphasized city policy and infrastructure changes especially in south-county cities.

**2. Environmental Education Plan:** Building collations and understanding shifts in educational practices, especially over the past year, requires research and reaching out to schools within MPRPD's jurisdictional footprint to better develop programs to address schools' and student's needs, and which programs will be utilized.

A needs assessment survey was sent to superintendents and assistant superintendents in Carmel (CUSD), Monterey (MPUSD), and Pacific Grove (PGUSD) school districts to gage the Environmental Education needs of the K-12 community and to identify how K-12 schools will be approaching the 2021/2022 school year. Results are still be tabulated. The Staff has initiated surveying teachers.

The initial Education Plan is under review and is subject to revision. This plan will identify on current and future staff capabilities, needs assessment, partner programs, and K-12 community member input.

3. **NRPA Grant:** Under contract with Regional Government Services' grant writer, Jean Crooks, staff applied for the National Recreation and Park Association Resilient Park Access Grant for the development of a Cachagua Community Park Master Plan. A copy of the grant is attached, entitled: APPLICATION: 5196 I GENERAL (ATTACHMENT 1).

The Resilient Park Access Grant addresses inequities in park access, environmental resilience, and health and wellness of communities by supporting their "inherent power." Funding is designed to support collaboration between and with the Cachagua Community and the Esselen Tribe to enhance cultural awareness via educational and interpretive signage, enhance wayfinding for the park and its trails, and conduct an assessment to identify the desired park amenities. The plan and its processes include cultural sensitivity training, planning-team training, and public workshops.

A video was created to address the "Focus on Equity" portion of the grant and can be viewed on YouTube at [MPRPD Cachagua Community Park \(https://youtu.be/j59h4LV9jag\)](https://youtu.be/j59h4LV9jag)

Staff thanks President Monta Potter, Dr. Rafael Payan, Esselen Tribe of Monterey County, Ms. Tess Arthur (Cachagua Advocate and CSUD Board Director), and Mr. Marvin Biasotti (CSUD Superintendent retired) for their letters of support.

4. **Special Use Permits:** Drafting of a "Beach Events" Special Use Permit application process was initiated.

The following Special Use Permits (SUP) were issued to and for:

- A. Big Sur Land Trust's *Race for Open Space* mountain trail run and fund-raising event, authorizing access to Palo Corona Regional Park's backcountry trails on April 17, 18, and 24; and an annual access permit for 2021.
- B. University of California-Davis will hold its annual Sudden Oak Death (SOD) Blitz/Citizen Science event for the Carmel Valley and Monterey Peninsula. The event begins on Friday, April 30<sup>th</sup> at 10am and runs through 10am, Wednesday, May 5<sup>th</sup>. The SOD Blitz station is located at the main entrance to the of Palo Corona Regional Park Discovery Center.

The SOD Blitz contributes to the statewide survey for Sudden Oak Death. This year, the specimens collected will help provide data and locations of the dangerous and highly virulent novel strain, or variant, of the SOD pathogen



(referred to as the EU1) which was detected in California’s oak woodlands and forests last year. The EU1 variant, which is known to be more aggressive than the NA1 variant (which is present in much of California’s oak woodlands and forests). It is imperative to detect this variant as soon as possible because its spread could accelerate the demise of our native oaks and tanoaks.

- 5. Volunteers:** Transitioning from the past year’s COVID-related “lock-down” is a multi-step process. Staff is developing a volunteer survey to better ascertain MPRPD’s volunteers’ comfort level regarding their return to public service, especially for in-person activities. The survey will inform and fully align with MPRPD’s Return-to-Work protocols.

## **OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE DIVISION**

- 1. BSIM Cross-Country & Fitness Course:** Ops, Admin, and EECO staff participated in an on-site meeting with Big Sur International Marathon (BSIM) and Santa Lucia Conservancy staff to discuss the proposed BSIM cross-country & fitness course at Palo Corona Regional Park. The meeting’s attendees toured the proposed alignment. This course will serve as a public fitness course and as a competition venue for middle school, high school, and collegiate athletes.



**BSIM Staff provides a summary of the proposed Cross-Country Fitness Course**

- 2. BSLT “Race for Open Space”:** Ops and EECO staff worked with the Big Sur Land Trust to facilitate the “Race for Open Space” at Palo Corona Regional Park. The event was a success, with over 60-participants traversing the Palo Corona backcountry, and no incidents to report.

- 3. California Coastal Trail:** Rangers continue to coordinate with the California Coastal Trail working group to identify the alignment for Segment 1, which traverses Palo Corona Regional Park from Carmel to the southern park boundary. A follow-up meeting will be convened after working group members have had a chance to tour the PCRP backcountry.
- 4. Marina Dunes Preserve Plover Fence and Patrols:** In coordination with Point Blue Conservancy, MPRPD's Rangers relocated the plover fence at Marina Dunes Preserve (MDP) to protect nests from being trampled by the Preserve's visitors. Additional signage was added to help reinforce the dog-on-leash requirement. A western snowy plover nest was identified and photographed for monitoring during this process. Rangers also continued the increased frequency of patrols at MDP to "crack-down" on trespassing and off-leash dog activity. A copy of the patrol log is available upon request.



**Additional signage posted along MDP Plover Fence**



**Western Snowy Plover Nest**

- 5. Project A:** Staff continued to meet bi-weekly with Project-A's architectural design team. The project recently transitioned from schematic design into the design development phase. The Dog Park's plans, which were recently added as Phase 3 of Project-A, are being developed concurrently. A kiosk that that will be utilized for



fundraising efforts was recently installed at the site. A concept plan was posted, along with some information on donor bricks.



**Information kiosk located at proposed dog park site**

- 6. Seasonal Mowing and Brushing:** First-round of mowing and brushing of all MPRPD trails and open spaces has begun. Rangers utilize a combination of in-house staff and equipment, and local equipment contractors to accomplish this.



**MPRPD's masticator mower operated by Ranger Jake**



**Ventana Forestry's flail mower operating at Rancho Canada Unit**

- 7. Trail Work at GRRP:** Ranger staff recently completed trio-maintenance on a section of Sky Trail at Garland Ranch Regional Park. Out-sloping was re-established, drain dips reconstructed, and the fill-slope berm removed.



**Ranger John enhancing existing trails**

- 8. PCRP Backcountry Road Work:** Rangers completed road improvements along Palo Corona Trail (the main road through the property) including removing overgrown vegetation from culvert inlets, berm removal, and out-sloping. This was done in conjunction with a Cal Fire road grader that visited the property in late January. The area is now prepped for the next winter's rainy season.



**The District's excavator being operated by Ranger Nico  
In the background, Ranger Jake operates MPRPD's tractor**

## Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District

Started at: 3/29/2021 01:27 PM - Finalized at: 4/23/2021 08:08 PM

### Page: Overview

#### Purpose

This funding will support projects that advance community-driven, systems-level strategies for equitable park access that improves the environmental resilience and health of communities. This grant program will support park and recreation professionals in partnership with leaders from community-based organizations. Projects should address system-wide park access planning, data collection/analysis, policies and capital improvements with a focus on creating climate-ready parks.

Agencies selected will have access to the following benefits:

- Ongoing coaching from NRPA and additional national and local professionals to support local planning efforts, through:
  - Ongoing group and individual calls tailored to advancing project and program goals.
  - Site visits to each grantee from national and local professionals
- Trainings, professional development, peer-to-peer support and networking opportunities to share lessons learned and address challenges.
- National visibility through:
  - Articles in Parks and Recreation magazine, Open Space Blog, partner publications, and national press releases
  - Opportunities to present at national conferences, including the NRPA Annual Conference

Grantees should incorporate strategies that:

- Follow local, community expertise.
- Prioritize Black, Indigenous, people of color, low-income, LGBTQ+, immigrant and refugee, and people with physical or cognitive disabilities as leaders.
- Position communities as the decision-makers. - National Funders Group, Amplify Fund

#### Availability of Funds

Total amount of funding available: \$3,000,000

Number of grants to be awarded: 6-10

Grant amount: \$300,000 - \$500,000 each

#### Eligibility/Guidelines



- The main applicant must be a local government agency that plans, builds and/or operates parks (e.g., municipal park and recreation department, tribal recreation department, public works department that manages parks etc.) or affiliated 501c(3) non-profit organization.
  - If the applicant is not a local government agency, the applicant is required to submit a letter of support for the project being proposed from the park and recreation agency director or equivalent.
  - See [FAQ Document](#) for more information.
- Community leadership (I.e., community-based organizations) must be included in planning, implementation and stewardship of projects.
- At least one signed letter, email or video/audio interview of support from each category:
  - local elected leader (for example, mayor or county executive)
  - agency head, and
  - community partner (outside of parks and recreation)
- Demonstration of a clear commitment to advance systems-change that prioritizes justice, diversity, equity and inclusion.

### **An Exemplary Applicant**

An exemplary applicant will center this project to dismantle systemic racism and address inequities of their park system. The project should be framed as a way of restorative justice to prioritize investments in Black, Indigenous, low-income communities and communities of color whose neighborhood infrastructure and community services experience underinvestment. The applicant will demonstrate grassroots, community support, advocacy and partnership for the planning, implementation and stewardship of the project, recognizing and supporting the inherent power of the community.

NRPA recognizes we are all on a journey to learning and understanding justice, diversity, equity and inclusion and how our personal and agency actions and policies impact Black, Indigenous, people of color, low-income individuals, LGBTQ+, New Americans and people with physical and cognitive disabilities. NRPA is looking to award agencies who are committed to continued learning and action to dismantle systemic racism and bring the power of parks and recreation to all. The section below is meant to provide a vision for how applicants should approach the proposal and project and can expect coaching to help guide, support, and implement these practices throughout the grant period.

### **Review Process**

NRPA will conduct a two-part review process with input from national partners and experienced park and recreation professionals. The first round of reviews will be based on the application itself including:

- Clear interest and commitment to park access, environmental resilience, and community health, and alignment with current city and agency priorities
- Demonstration of clear commitment to systems changes and an organizational commitment to prioritize justice, diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Integration of community leaders in the project's planning, implementation and



stewardship.

- Strong project management plan.
- Community-level and agency leadership support.

The second round of reviews will include objective demographic, geographic, and community metrics (including [CDC SVI score](#), [ParkServe](#) data, and local plans and policies provided by the applicant) that will aid in the identification of a diverse cohort of finalists. The finalists will then participate in a short phone interview before the 6-10 grantees are selected.

Reviewers will undergo implicit bias training ahead of the review process to ensure all applications are fairly judged.

## Grant Requirements

Through this grant and coaching opportunity, awarded agencies will be responsible for several deliverables that result in a final plan and capital improvement project on park access and environmental resilience. To accomplish this, we expect that agencies will:

- Join and participate in ongoing coaching calls (combination of individual, small group, and large group)
- Create an individual coaching plan with NRPA's Park Access team
- Attend a yearly virtual or in-person training.
  - Grantees will use grant funds for travel expenses.
- Develop a specific SMART goal, an action plan and begin implementation of research, planning, programming, and a capital improvement project. See [FAQ document](#) for *SMART goal definition*.
- Participate in evaluation efforts that will include submitting planning documents and completing pre-and post-surveys.

## Questions

A list of frequently asked questions can be found [here](#).

NRPA hosted a webinar to provide an overview of the program and help answer applicant questions on Thursday, March 11th. **View the webinar [here](#)**. If your question has not been answered in any of the resources above, please e-mail: [parkaccess@nrpa.org](mailto:parkaccess@nrpa.org).

## Timeline and Important Dates

Application Open	March 1, 2021
Informational Webinar	March 11, 2021 at 2:00pm ET
Application Closes	April 23, 2021
Cities Selected	On or before May 21, 2021

Kick-off Call	Early-mid June 2021
Virtual Training	Late September 2021
One Year Interim Report	June 2022
Final Reports due	September 2023

### Completing the Application

Applicants have the option of submitting parts of the application in written, video or voice recording forms. These are clearly marked on each question. We encourage applicants to use the methods they feel most comfortable using but note that some questions require a written response.

The video and voice recordings should clearly answer all components of each question. However, creativity is welcome. All methods of response will be equally scored during the review process without preference given to any one method.

Examples of video or voice recordings could be:

- Interview style with stakeholders (municipal or community partners, community members, park and recreation professionals, etc.).
- A story-telling format with images, clips or descriptions of project focus areas (example could be a podcast).
- A multi-media presentation.

Regardless of written, video or voice recorded submissions, a complete application must be submitted through NRPA’s online grant application system.

**Applications are due by April 23rd 11:59 PM PST** and NRPA anticipates notifying applicants on or before May 21st.

### Page: Eligibility and Contact

To help you fill out this form, NRPA allows multiple people to work on a single application. If you would like to invite a colleague or multiple colleagues to assist you in completing your application, click the **Manage Collaborators** button at the top-right of this form. From there, you will be able to add collaborators - All you need is their name and valid e-mail address. Keep in mind that your application can only be submitted by the individual who started this application. You may also revoke a collaborator’s access at any time using the same menu.

You have the option to complete the entire application in writing or partially written and media. All written components must be submitted through this online application.

If you are submitting a partial media application, you must provide written statements to questions where indicated. For all media question responses, you must indicate the questions covered through media response – this could simply be a sentence “Answered in the video” or “Answered in the attached podcast.” There will be space at the end of the application to upload all media files. **Multimedia submissions should not exceed a total of 20 minutes.**

Partial media applications must cover all points of each question. All applications, written or partial media, will be judged equally without preference to one method.

\*\*Definitions of key terms can be found in the [FAQ document](#) (10-minute walk, community-based organizations, environmental resilience, DEI [diversity, equity and inclusion], park access, restorative justice, SMART goal, systems-change and systemic racism).

**Eligibility**

Local, municipal or regional government agency

**Agency Name**

Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District

**First Name**

Jackie

**Last Name**

Nelson

**Email Address**

nelson@mprpd.org

**Page: Agency Information**

**Agency head responses must be written.**

**aliasd6dc3bfba4164daab51ad31895afc2ac**

Rafael Payan, General Manager

**alias627b6d900abe4719a51f331dc8356d80**

payan@mprpd.org

**aliasee354bff5d4a4d66a9454e260edf101a**

+1 831-372-3196



## **Project Management**

Planning Team with Key Stakeholders

Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District

Jackie Nelson, Environmental Education Supervisor

Project management, contract and budget oversight, document preparation, meeting facilitation, outreach and network 20% Annually | 500 hrs\* | 16 hrs/mo

Debbie Wyatt, Environmental Education Coordinator-Volunteers

Interpretative planning, volunteer management, outreach 10% Annually | 240 hrs | 8 hrs/mo

Joe Narvaez, Ranger

Capital Improve/Construction oversight – infrastructure, trails, fencing, community liaison

| 300 hrs project

Rafael Payan, General Manager

Advisory role, liaison between MPRPD Board and staff, Concept Design, sustainable change maker

| 60 hrs

Carmel Unified School District (CUSD) | 90 hrs | 3 hrs/mo (each)

Tess Arthur, CUSD Board Director

School and community liaison, represents school and students

Marvin Biasotti, CUSD Superintendent, Retired

Heather Sino, CUSD Teacher

On site preschool teacher, after school programs, and resident

Esselen Tribe of Monterey County

Tom Little Bear Nason, Tribal President

Historian, development design, story development, interpretive materials, construction assistance

| 210 hrs | 7 hrs/mo

Cari Herthel, Tribal Vice Chair member, spiritual leader

Historian, sacred blessings, story development, interpretive materials

| 180 hrs | 6 hrs/mo

Jana Nason, Tribal Administrator & Secretary

Development of education curriculum, story development, interpretive materials

| 210 hrs | 7 hrs/mo

Susan Morley, Historian, archeologist | 180 hrs | 6 hrs/mo

Community Members | 90 hrs | 3 hrs/mo (each)

Kimberly Boughner, Cachagua Community Park Board, resident, park caretaker

Martine Salinas, Cachagua Community Park Board

Represents the two trailer parks (Princes Camp/Valley Creek Park) and sports league, Bi-lingual (English and Spanish) translations and communications

Orville Meyers, Cachagua Community Park Board

Resident, community leader, and pastor

\*Hours are based on 30 months or 2.5 years. Some months may have more hours, while other months like November, December have fewer hours.

**The following responses will not affect your eligibility but ensure we have a diverse set of cities. Information should be for the government agency that operates parks in your city.**

**aliasf33574f20cbf48f89db9a5e2c4bcfab4**

8798655

**aliascf9ae971ff754813a7dea13f51d96021**

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### **City and Agency Goals**

MPRPD's Cachagua Community Park Master Plan Project is a prototype to improve the quality of a rural park in an underserved area and to collaborate with the community to develop ancient Indigenous land into a cultural experience. This project initiates a systemic change motivated by MPRPD's commitment to consider social justice and social equity as an integral part of park planning. The District's 2021-2025 Strategic Plan specifically identifies and defines the Cachagua Community Park Master Plan project showing agency support from elected leaders, management, staff, and volunteers. The Strategic Plan cites the following:

Master plan all MPRPD properties, priority given to environmentally and culturally significant properties

Formulate and implement actions that overcome racism and discrimination, and social, physical, and economic barriers, by creating meaningful opportunities that are available to and welcome to everybody

Balance the distribution of high-quality parks, open spaces, facilities, recreational, and environmental educational opportunities throughout the MPRPD, especially focusing on reaching, inviting, and serving the region's diverse populations

Reach and serve underserved populations by working with collaborators and adopt and implement their processes

Become a leader regarding the Central Coast's cultural history by partnering with the region's Indigenous Tribes, colleges, universities, private parties, and organizations to tell the region's human history

Partner with the region's Indigenous People and communities on MPRPD projects by consistently inviting Tribal members' participation in research, planning, design, and implementation of land-use and capital improvement projects and the public's cultural education, and help coordinate or reinstitute traditional use of native habitats and resources by Indigenous People

Be recognized for developing and sustaining strong, productive coalitions with other stakeholders in the research, monitoring, preservation, conservation, restoration and protection of natural and cultural resources, and in the provision of quality passive recreational and environmental education

Become a leader regarding the Central Coast's natural history

## Challenges

Demographic shifts have created new park users, requiring more access. We strive to help people to become better stewards of the land. And, we are designing for people of all abilities.

COVID-19 impacted service delivery. We were restricted in reaching people and volunteers, socialization was limited as was our capacity to offer programs. As essential staff, only the rangers worked at the parks during the pandemic shut-down. Many of the parklands are not coastal, but remote open spaces and wildlands, so it was difficult to patrol all of the lands and trails on a daily basis. All other staff were assigned to work remotely limiting interactions with park users, programming and outreach. Volunteer activities have been suspended since March 13, 2020. We outreach to people with virtual platforms instead.

We also experienced a visitation surge in our parks and trails. Regulation and enforcement events related to use of restrooms, roads, parking lots, trash, trail use, non-compliance/violations, etc. were three- to four-times as many before COVID. Only MPRPD parks in Monterey County remained open from March-July 2020 ; city, county, state (beaches too), and federal parks all closed.

We are challenged by climate change that produces high winds, extreme heat, fires, drought and floods. We are vigilant about keeping our parks and open spaces maintained and monitored. We try to balance public access, recreation with protection of wildlife and natural resources.

With only 15.5 staff, we have a limited capacity in an era of growth. MPRPD continues to purchase new lands to conserve and protect, expand education and outreach programs, and launch large capital improvement projects. To reach our goals, we have launched pursuits of several grants, including this one, that would finance additional services and improvements to our park system.

## Page: Project Information

### Project Focus

MPRPD will create a Cachagua Community Park Master Plan. This underserved community park is in a rural area with a small, diverse population where there was once an ancient Esselen village. In partnership with the community and the Esselen Tribe, the Plan will become a model for systemic change and cultural parks and resource protection. Implementation of the plan will include installation of park amenities and signage to communicate the significance of the Esselen Tribe and the park history.

### Project Goals and Details

#### Goals

A. Improve the quality life, health, and environmental/cultural literacy for the community B. Help perpetuate Esselen culture, promote cultural literacy, and highlight the significance of the Native people.

#### Year 1 Tasks:

T1: Collaboration with the community and the Esselen about cultural signage, wayfinding for the park and trails, and the assessment of desired park amenities. Includes cultural sensitivity training, planning team training, and public workshops.

Outcome: A Facilities and Interpretive Master Plan

T2: Update archaeological/environmental assessment and mediation of existing conditions

Outcome: Scientific analysis and instruction of ways to protect the site

T3: Partner with the Esselen Tribe to acknowledge their ancient homeland and collect content and artifacts for stories, exhibits and signage that help preserve their history and culture.

Outcome: Collection of Esselen interpretive content for signage

T4: Install culturally sensitive “no-dig” fencing to minimize disturbance of protected areas

Outcome: Preservation of natural resources and cultural sites

Year 2 Tasks: (end of grant period)

T1: Install additional park amenities

Outcome: Improvement in quality of the park for social equity for an underserved community

T2: Install signage about Esselen Tribe in the park

Outcome: Implementation of systemic change in park planning and social justice through the acknowledgement of the Esselen, their stewardship, and culture.

T3: Install wayfinding signage to direct visitors toward features of the park

Outcome: Guidance of visitor experience and protection of natural resources and cultural sites

T4: Facilitate collaboration of the Esselen and the school district for collection of stories that depict the Esselen traditional way of life

Outcome: Increased opportunities for active educational field trips and cultural lesson plans for school children

T5: Produce a replicable “best practices” park design model for Indigenous recognition within parks on ancient land in the MPRPD and beyond.

Outcome: A systemic change in park planning: Consideration of the needs of Native People before developing a plan for a park that is on a cultural site.

After that - Year 5 Tasks:

T1: Continue work with the community and the Esselen to enhance health, safety, and connection

Outcome: Increase in park events, cultural activities. Increase in frequency of use of the park by community. Increase in satisfaction with park amenities.

T2: Assess and continue improvements based on Master Plan

Outcome: Revision of Master Plan based on needs and resources

T3: Consider designating the park as an official gathering place used during fires and natural disasters, healthcare treatment, and social venues

Outcome: Partnership with agencies to deliver these services

T4: Offer the park as a research site on climate change and natural resource resiliency

Outcome: Affiliations with universities, scholars, or institutes to conduct specific research

T5: Explore other ways to restore Esselen culture

Outcome: Development of a cultural center

## **Capital Improvement Site (Optional)**

Street address



## Site Name

Cachagua Community Park

**alias040efb2ac51a47eab55db43d8912e3fa**

37320 Nason Road  
Carmel Valley California 93924 US

## Page: Equity and Community Prioritization

**“Community power is the key driver of just and equitable development.” -**

Neighborhood Funders Group, Amplify Fund

Central to this project is diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI). The grant program is designed to advance park access leading with racial equity and inclusion. Whether this is new for your agency or if the agency has already started on this journey, this project should be an opportunity to address these areas.

For definitions, refer to Appendix A of the [FAQ Document](#).

## Partnerships

Esselen Tribe of Monterey County – MPRPD has many parklands once inhabited by the Esselen, Rumsen Ohlone peoples. Under Rafael Payan’s leadership the relation with the Tribes has grown significantly and built stronger and more positive relationships. Tribal members and MPRPD offer ongoing meetings to share stories and envision the protection and education of the culture. Role: Reconciliation Circle, Facilities and Interpretive Experience Plan (FIEP), Capital Improvement project design, interpretation, and curriculum.

Cachagua Community Board (CCB) – For more than 30 years the CCB has monitored and overseen the caretaking of the park. Joseph Narvaez, MPRPD Ranger, is a well-respected MPRPD liaison with CCB and the area residents, and regularly attends the board meetings. MPRPD is an active supporter and participant in the Cachagua Country Fair fundraiser held every two years. Role: Support and leadership of park design features, signage, and amenity selection, FIEP.

Carmel Unified School District – From headwaters of the Carmel River to the Pacific Ocean, MPRPD has three sites (Cachagua, Garland, and Palo Corona) for outdoor environmental education opportunities. MPRPD works with CUSD administrators and teachers from all grade levels to develop programs, provide access, and lead activities. Role: Collaboration to offer programs for the rural, underserved communities of Cachagua, community liaison, reconciliation circle, FIEP, Capital Improvement project design.

Cachagua Fire Protection District – (CFPD Firehouse next to Princes Camp). MPRPD ranger staff communicates regularly with the CFPD and clearly understands the communities’ fire safety concerns. Role: Advise and design CCP as a staging area during natural disasters, FIEP.

Area Residents and Businesses – MPRPD has many close relationships with community members that will continue to get stronger as we unite on the common goal of developing a master plan to protect the cultural and natural resources. Role: Community meetings and Master Planning, FIEP.

## Focus on Equity

See Video: NRPA Cachagua Final

## Community Prioritization

### Reconciliation Circles:

The MPRPD is committed to inclusion of this diverse group that includes the Esselen Tribe; the local residents who are mostly Latinx and/or economically disadvantaged who need access to a quality park for their health and wellness; and the mostly White advantaged residents who live nearby. To facilitate our goals of social equity and social justice, we will hire a consultant to deliver cultural sensitivity workshops for the internal Planning Team of key stakeholders and the Facilities and Interpretive Experience Plan (FIEP) consulting facilitator.

### Collaborative Planning Workshops & Public Engagement Presentations:

A consultant will develop a Facilities and Interpretive Experience Plan (FIEP) for Cachagua Community Park after a series of collaborative workshops. The Planning Team will establish goals, objectives, messaging, and interpretive inventory. Residents will be invited to give feedback during separate presentations (in person and virtual) of: a) the planning process; b) the draft interpretive goals, objectives, and themes; c) the first draft of the FIEP; and d) the preparation of the final draft of the FIEP.

### Design Development and Construction:

The FIEP resulting from the planning phase will outline the phases for implementation and stewardship of the plan for park improvements to trails (accessible), signage, park amenities, and a visitor interpretive experience of the Park Master Plan. The Esselen will take the lead in the archaeological assessment of the site, documentation of Tribal stories, development of educational curriculum, and design of the 'no-dig' fencing.

Virtual Meetings: Video or audio calls with residents to elicit feedback.

Stakeholder Interviews, Surveys, and Phone Calls: The planning team will call, interview or survey as needed.

Project Website Updates: The MPRPD will maintain a project webpage.

## Statements of Support

### Statements

**Link to statement:** <https://vo-general.s3.amazonaws.com/3d227216-39b7-4467-9420-a4c2f0201544/e53e64fa-89b7-4062-bcc7-fb06fe20b9af?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAJ4PRWO26HAX3IOCA&Expires=1705766645&response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3D%22Pres%20Potter%20LOS%20NRPA%20Grant%204-2021.pdf%22&response-content-type=application%2Fpdf&Signature=94dNYSiqzmOA2md9N%2BxBcfvbNE%3D>

**Statement type:** Local elected leader

**Link to statement:** <https://vo-general.s3.amazonaws.com/3d227216-39b7-4467-9420-a4c2f0201544/7f4c31aa-e696-4212-b3d8-9a12dc9b2aa8?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAJ4PRWO26HAX3IOCA&Expires=1705766645&response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3D%22Payan%20Letter%20of%20Support%20NRPA%204-23-21.pdf%22&response-content-type=application%2Fpdf&Signature=94dNYSiqzmOA2md9N%2BxBcfvbNE%3D>

type=application%2Fpdf&Signature=OwGrVfJ7k%2FfkYnZIS1FZCoxCIVY%3D

**Statement type:** Agency head

**Link to statement:** <https://vo-general.s3.amazonaws.com/3d227216-39b7-4467-9420-a4c2f0201544/c48a644a-bfe5-4da9-8218-9b611c9d4f80?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAJ4PRWO26HAX3IOCA&Expires=1705766645&response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3D%22ETMC%20Letter%20of%20Support%20Cachagua%20Par21.pdf%22&response-content-type=application%2Fpdf&Signature=nAnemNpCYOGW1TrRPW6oJfryUw8%3D>

AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAJ4PRWO26HAX3IOCA&Expires=1705766645&response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3D%22ETMC%20Letter%20of%20Support%20Cachagua%20Par21.pdf%22&response-content-

type=application%2Fpdf&Signature=nAnemNpCYOGW1TrRPW6oJfryUw8%3D

**Statement type:** Community partner

**Link to statement:** <https://vo-general.s3.amazonaws.com/3d227216-39b7-4467-9420-a4c2f0201544/219f3cca-f653-4b6f-8de0-5fff9cb67e81?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAJ4PRWO26HAX3IOCA&Expires=1705766645&response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3D%22Art%20hur%20LOS%20NRPA%20Grant%204-2021.pdf%22&response-content-type=application%2Fpdf&Signature=1tq8fRADkQQPqSN948lvJw4YHLS%3D>

AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAJ4PRWO26HAX3IOCA&Expires=1705766645&response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3D%22Art%20hur%20LOS%20NRPA%20Grant%204-2021.pdf%22&response-content-

type=application%2Fpdf&Signature=1tq8fRADkQQPqSN948lvJw4YHLS%3D

**Statement type:** Community partner

**Link to statement:** <https://vo-general.s3.amazonaws.com/3d227216-39b7-4467-9420-a4c2f0201544/bff180e5-5ac1-49c5-812b-c897214dabf5?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAJ4PRWO26HAX3IOCA&Expires=1705766645&response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3D%22Biasotti%20NRPA%20grant%20LOS%204-23-21.pdf%22&response-content-type=application%2Fpdf&Signature=1VaV7GSxEuJtc6cZKF0R0UXya4c%3D>

AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAJ4PRWO26HAX3IOCA&Expires=1705766645&response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3D%22Biasotti%20NRPA%20grant%20LOS%204-23-21.pdf%22&response-content-

type=application%2Fpdf&Signature=1VaV7GSxEuJtc6cZKF0R0UXya4c%3D

**Statement type:** Community partner

**Page: Access, Health and Resilience**

## **Park Access**

MPRPD is reckoning with the inaction of the past and recognizes its responsibility to make equity-focused decisions in the management of its parks. This exciting project is an opportunity to make Cachagua Community Park a prototype to improve the quality of a rural park in an underserved area and to collaborate with the community to develop ancient Indigenous land into a cultural experience. Success of this project would be a start for social equity for this community's park access and for social justice for the Esselen Tribe.

A rural park is judged by its quality and how it makes a difference in the life of its small community, and especially its children, not the number of people it serves. Of the 1100 people who live within five miles of the park, the 221 who live within a half-mile have the greatest need. A concentration of farm workers, multi-generational families, and retirees live in 80 mobile homes nearby; 3% are children under 15, 29% are seniors over 65, and 13% of households have someone with a disability. There is no public transit and the nearest grocery store is 16 miles away. Adding park features that invite physical activity, community gatherings, and opportunities to enjoy a natural environment will provide physical and mental health benefits to these residents.

As a systemic change, the MPRPD's planning process will be different for this park, which is sited on ancient land that was once an Esselen Tribe village. The Esselen have inhabited the Santa Lucia Mountains and the Big Sur coast for over 6,000 years. In the 1700's, the Spanish moved them to reside in missions, and forbade them to speak their native language. They were never able to reclaim any of their villages. Only a few hundred of the Esselen Tribe live in Monterey County today. Their culture is in danger of erasure. In the past, we looked at our parks as having cultural sites. With this project, we are thinking that this cultural site has a park. Preservation of sacred sites and archaeological artifacts will receive priority consideration. Our effort to acknowledge the Esselen Tribe and provide truth-telling exhibits is one step toward social justice for this group of Indigenous People.

Dr. Rafael Payan, MPRPD General Manager is a champion of this project. He is San Carlos Apache and volunteers his time with several tribes. Tom Little Bear Nason, the Tribal Chairman of the Esselen Tribe of Monterey County, will be a valued advisor and planning team member. Tess Arthur, Carmel Unified School District Board Director, another planning team member will help create a visitor experience that is accessible, active, cultural, and educational.

This grant will fund a new process for park planning on Indigenous land. It will start with reconciliation circles; include a collaborative community planning process with MPRPD, the Tribe, Planning Team and residents; and begin installation of park amenities, protective fencing, signage/exhibits for a cultural experience about the Esselen, and wayfinding signs for the park and trails.

## **Environmental Resilience**

This community is greatly impacted by climate change via fire, extreme wind and heat, drought, post-fire flooding and mudslides, poor air quality due to smoke and ash from fires, and situations due to erosion. The narrow two-lane winding Cachagua Road washed out during winter 2017 storms, isolating the area nearly a month. The only way out was to travel an additional 20 miles around the washout.

Fifty-five homes were lost in the 2020 Carmel Fire. With climate change, more fires are feared due to dry winters and hot, windy weather at the end of the summer. Conveniently located next to the Cachagua Fire Protection District Firehouse, Cachagua Community Park is an ideal location for a staging area for evacuation.

Cachagua Community Park overlooks the Carmel River that flows northwest to the Pacific Ocean to Carmel Bay. Many stream restoration and conservation projects are underway to protect this watershed. For example, the Carmel River Watershed Conservancy (CRWC) helps protect and restore populations of threatened species of steelhead trout and California red-legged frogs. The fish require cold, clean, and fast moving (aerated) water for survival; runoff from burned areas negatively affects the chemistry of the river. A design goal of this project would be to keep the park area around the river as pristine as possible by educating visitors of its value while balancing public access, recreation and protection of the wildlife and natural resources. The planning process provides a venue for the community to identify environmental challenges and an opportunity to communicate with agency management.

## **Health**

Limited Access to Services: This community does not have reliable cellular and broadband service. This restricts access to goods and services; even COVID-19 vaccinations are scheduled online. The parking lot has free access to wifi; the addition of wifi hot spots is a consideration after Year 2. The site can also serve as a venue for mobile health units and vaccinations.

Threat of Fire: Major fires have resulted in mandatory evacuations of the community. When fire breaks out, some are unable to get from work back to their children, pets and livestock. The park is next door to the fire station and can serve as an incident command center, gathering place, and staging area during fire.

Disability and Substance Use: Within a half-mile of the park, the Census counts 29 households having someone with a disability. This park project includes access to the trails and other park features for those differently abled. There are reports from the caretaker about prevalent intoxicated behavior. Additional oversight measures are included for the safety of park users and the preservation of the park.

Food Insecurity: According to the Carmel Valley Unified School District, there are 135 students enrolled from the Cachagua area; 59% of them receive free or reduced-fee lunch. In the population of 221 people within a half-mile of the park, 28.7% are seniors over 65. The park is a hub for Meals on Wheels and the local food bank that serve some of these families.

Extreme Heat: Heat waves can produce temperatures up to 115 degrees, with most days in the high 80's and 90's from August through October. From the letters we have received from residents, we anticipate that shade structures and a water fountain will be on the list of high priority items in this project.

## **Page: Budget and Attachments**

### **Budget Amount**

499100

## Budget

[Download File](#)

### Budget Description

The budget supports a holistic methodology to rural park design. We will start with reconciliation circle workshops to increase cultural sensitivity affording people the tools to engage in meaningful conversations. Outside consultants will facilitate community outreach phases of the planning related to park improvements to trails (accessible), signage, park amenities, and a visitor interpretive experience of the Park Master Plan. Completion of an archaeological assessment of the site, documentation of Tribal stories, development of educational curriculum, and design of the 'no-dig' fencing are budgeted to be conducted by the Esselen Tribe.

#### Personnel

Costs reflect the MPRPD Planning Team members and are based on the approximate time committed by each staff member. Salary and benefits are based on FY 21-22 rates.

#### Training, Development and Travel

MPRPD will pay for two of its staff to participate. Grant monies are for a minimum of two community stakeholders to participate.

#### Consulting

The first year of the grant focuses on making changes, opening dialogues and building consensus. Experts and outside facilitators will guide and direct the following:

1. Cultural Sensitivity Awareness and Reconciliation Circle
2. Master Planning Process
  - a. Visitor Experience and Interpretation Consultant
  - b. Concept Design
  - c. Graphic designer
3. Archaeological Assessment/Monitoring
4. Esselen Educational Curriculum & Programming

#### Meeting Expenses

Room rental at the park and stipends for Planning Team members are included in the budget.

#### Capital Expenses

Year 2 sees the implementation of the capital improvement projects: 'no dig' culturally sensitive fencing, accessible trails, interpretative signage, and park entrance/monument sign.

## Media Attachments (Optional)

### Media

Link to media:<https://vo-general.s3.amazonaws.com/3d227216-39b7-4467-9420-a4c2f0201544/32f95c3b-1945-4d1b-92b9-80fc6932dd11?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAJ4PRWO26HAX3IOCA&Expires=1705766645&response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3D%22NRPA%20Cachagua%20Final.mp4%22&response-content-type=video%2Fmp4&Signature=0%2FVDt%2Fq7RbGAlug8PV%2F4jKGVvAE%3D>

Media Name:NRPA Cachagua Final.mp4

Media Type:Video

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Please review your application before final submission. Only the application owner, not collaborators, can submit the application. Applications are due by Friday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> at 11:59 PM PST.

For any questions, email [parkaccess@nrpa.org](mailto:parkaccess@nrpa.org).