

## Summary of 9/26/17 River Management Plan Update Board item

The Chief Administrative Office, Parks Division, is requesting the following from the Board of Supervisors on Tuesday, September 26, 2017 at 2:00:

- 1) Tentatively approve the final draft of the Summer 2017 River Management Plan which will serve as the Project Description for the preparation of a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Initial Study document;
- 2) Direct staff to move forward with the Consultant to complete the CEQA process;

Background: The River Management Plan (RMP) has not been updated since 2001. The plan is supposed to be reviewed for adequacy every 5 years. Staff is presenting an updated RMP for tentative approval which is required to begin the CEQA process.

The update to the RMP has gone through an extensive public review process, beginning in February 2016. The public and the River Management Advisory Committee (RMAC) had four months to formally comment on the revised plan between February 2016 and June 14, 2016. In addition, RMAC held two special meetings specific to the revised RMP, one on 7/25/17 and the other on 8/30/17. Meeting notices were published and the meetings were open to the public.

The updated RMP was also presented twice to the Planning Commission; once during a workshop on 6/22/17 and again on 8/10/17 at which time the Planning Commission unanimously approved staff's recommended updated RMP with one revision that has been incorporated into the plan.

- 3) Provide direction to staff on Resolution 065-2002 relating to the River Management Advisory Committee.

RMAC is an advisory committee established by BOS Resolution 065-2002. Tentative approval of the updated RMP **does not** dissolve RMAC. Staff is simply recommending the removal of all reference to RMAC in the RMP because RMAC is a Board appointed advisory committee, not a directive of the River Management Plan.

Staff is recommending including the Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) in the revised RMP as the legislative body that will hear annual summaries related to river management activities in a public session. The PRC is established for the expressed purpose of overseeing the development and maintenance of recreational opportunities within the County. If substantive issues or suggestions are identified in these sessions, the Parks Division will conduct focused study of these subjects for consideration at the next PRC meeting. The PRC has the authority to appoint citizen's committees to assist in making recommendations to the Commission concerning these issues.

### *Institutional Groups*

The updated RMP changes the eligibility requirements for an Institutional Group. Only accredited educational course would be able to register as an Institutional Group. This change will affect 6 groups currently designated as Institutional. These groups would be required to get an annual River Use Permit and will pay a permit fee and guest user fees. The chart below details the financial impact to these organizations based on use data from the past 5 years.

	Annual Cost of User Guest Fee (\$2 per person) and Annual Permit Fee (\$200) 2012-2016				
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Friends of the River	\$1,100	\$1,252	\$898	\$934	\$618
Healing Waters	\$856	\$768	\$934	\$1,060	\$940
Beale AFB	\$692	\$436	\$373	\$322	\$302
Travis AFB	\$748	\$624	\$638	\$658	\$628
ICO – Sierra Club	\$1,290	\$788	\$790	\$838	\$608
Calvary Chapel	\$848	\$760	\$832	\$416	\$708

Under this proposed change, each group would have the ability to do the following:

- Have paid employees such as guides, drivers, etc.
- Run fundraising trips
- Solicit or require membership or donation dues
- Advertise and promote river trips
- Charge fees above the actual cost of the trip

This change to the Institutional designation would bring the County's requirements of these organizations in line with current practices of State Parks and the Bureau of Land Management. In addition, this change will eliminate the disparity between how categories of organized entities (Commercial and Non-Profit) are treated and allow for better management of daily capacity on the river. Staff is recommending a three year phase in for these entities to ensure a smooth transition.

It is important to note that the discussions around Institutional groups has been ongoing for several years. In 2013 a proposal was brought forth by RMAC after three formal rounds of stakeholder and public input meetings regarding this issue. The proposal was put on hold to be addressed in the comprehensive RMP update that was started in 2014. The changes currently proposed in the updated RMP are a streamlined version of the proposal put forth by RMAC in 2013. The changes were included in the information presented to the public in February 2016, and have been available to the public and the Institutional groups for formal comment during the four month public comment period. Comments were received from ICO-Sierra Club, again referencing many past discussions dating back to 2012. Various representatives from the

Institutional groups have also attended RMAC meetings and the Planning Commission meetings to share concerns regarding these changes. Staff has responded to these concerns with additional information and has added language to Appendix D of the RMP stating the intention of a three year timeline to transition these groups into the River Use Permit system.

## **FAQ's**

**Q:** Does the updated River Management Plan dissolve the River Management Advisory Committee?

*A: No. The River Management Advisory Committee is established by Board Resolution 065-2002 and remains in existence with the same powers and duties until such time as the Board makes changes to the Resolution.*

**Q:** Has there been public outreach regarding the updated River Management Plan (RMP)?

*A: Yes. The redlined version of the RMP was posted to the County website on February 10, 2016. A public meeting was held on February 18, 2016 with the consultant present to answer questions. The County solicited and received public comment on the red-lined plan up until June, 2016.*

*Public comments were received and reviewed by staff. Some comments were incorporated into the final draft RMP (Summer 2017), which was presented to the Planning Commission on June 22, 2017 and again on August 10, 2017.*

**Q:** Have the current Institutional Groups been made aware of the changes in the revised RMP that would affect their existing Institutional Group designation?

*A: Yes. The Institutional Groups have been involved in multiple public meetings dating back to 2012. The disparity between how categories of organized entities (Commercial and Non-Profit) are treated has been a topic of public discussion for well over five years.*