

Park plans in the works countywide

By [Dawn Hodson](#)



A rendering depicts the layout of a sports complex considered for Diamond Springs. Courtesy graphic

An ambitious parks program was reviewed and approved at Tuesday's meeting of the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors.

Vickie Sanders, parks manager for the county, outlined a long list of projects that will add to existing recreational and sports venues in the county.

She also discussed the need for an updated Parks and Trails Master Plan and for more staff to ensure those plans are implemented.

Included in the list of projects currently under way or being considered are:

Old Depot Road bike park — Adjacent to a section of the El Dorado Trail near Missouri Flat Road on Old Depot Road, a bike park was previously authorized by the board and funded with Proposition 68 money. Construction of the park is slated to begin in the spring of 2021 and be completed December 2021.

Park at Chili Bar — A park at Chili Bar has been proposed with a feasibility study of the project estimated to be complete by summer 2021. Funded with money from SMUD, the study will examine the existing infrastructure on the 16-acre site, make recommendations for its use and what it will cost to implement recommendations. No funding has been identified for constructing improvements.

Monroe Ridge Trail — A proposed Monroe Ridge Trail would be a 2.3-mile unpaved trail from Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park to Henningsen Lotus Park in the Coloma-Lotus valley. The trail would be a link between Henningsen-Lotus Park and the Lotus-Coloma business district. The 2.3-mile portion would be completed by the state of California. The creek crossing is the only portion of the trail the county would be responsible for. A contract has been issued for the creek crossing with work beginning Aug. 17.

Forebay Community Park — Needed improvements to the Forebay Community Park in Pollock Pines were also described. Presently the park features a little league ball field, batting cage, bleachers, scorers booth, snack shack, horseshoe pits and community building. ADA-related improvements have been made each year by the county but additional improvements the community would like to see include a playground, more trails and pathways, picnic shelters, pavilions, a disc golf course, dog parks and bike paths. The Community Economic Development Association of Pollock Pines is currently working to raise funds to put in a playground and bike trail there. The restroom at the park also needs to be replaced and built to meet ADA standards.

El Dorado County Historical Railroad Park — Another project is one the Board of Supervisors approved in 2009. It's for an El Dorado County Historical Railroad Park to be located in the community of El Dorado as a satellite facility of the El Dorado County Museum. The 6.3-acre site would be home to the museum's collection of railroad artifacts, a section of operational track and multiple-use pedestrian, bicycle and equestrian trails. County staff suggested that a Prop. 68 grant could be pursued to fund the project.

Sports complex — A sports complex was also mentioned as a top priority for the community as sports fields at local schools are usually only available on a limited basis. A 30-acre site in the Missouri Flat/Diamond Springs area is owned by the Marshall Foundation with the intent that it be used as a sports complex. Sanders said while there is no agreement with the foundation, it presents an opportunity to develop an active recreation center at the site and to operate it as a public/private project with the Boys & Girls Club of El Dorado County Western Slope running it.

Placerville dog park — A dog park in Placerville may go in next to the El Dorado Trail off Jacquier Road where county-owned land is vacant. Staff has proposed the county and city work together to fund the development of a dog park, although no plan has been proposed or approved and no funding has been identified.

56 acres in South Lake Tahoe — The city of South Lake Tahoe has received a grant from the California Tahoe Conservancy to study uses for a 56-acre parcel along Lake Tahoe's shore.

Funding opportunities

A variety of options for funding these projects were outlined by Sanders during her presentation.

One source of funding would be the sale of a 26-acre parcel at the end of Red Hook Trail Road in Pollock Pines. The Parks and Recreation Commission recommended that the funds from the property sale be used to fund the Forebay Community Park improvements.

Another piece of property, already sold by the county — a 41-acre site adjacent to Bass Lake that was acquired by the El Dorado Hills Community Services District — brought in \$250,000 which the Parks and Recreation Commission recommended be used to fund the design, environmental analysis and permits for a sports complex.

Prop. 68 also presents opportunities for grants toward these projects with some \$395 million in funding available. Projects meeting grant criteria include the sports complex, Forebay Community Park improvements and the railroad park; the sports complex and railroad park would require a 20% match.

Prop. 68 awards funding on a per-capita basis. The county was awarded \$400,000, which is limited to the acquisition of land or improvements to an existing property.

Other grant opportunities include \$23 million available through California State Parks' Rural Recreation and Tourism Program and another \$23 million through its Regional Park Program.

Based on staff recommendations and those of the Parks and Recreation Commission, the Board of Supervisors approved staff continuing with the sale of the Red Hook Property and use of the proceeds for future park acquisition or development consistent with the county's General Plan and Parks Master Plan.

The board directed that Prop. 68 per-capita funding be used for construction of restroom improvements at Forebay Community Park, a playground at the railroad park and a dog park, working jointly with the city of Placerville.

Last, the board approved staff working with County Counsel to acquire the property located at 3447 Clemenger Drive currently owned by the Marshall Foundation for the development of a sports complex, and to utilize the proceeds from the Bass Lake property for the purpose of conducting a fiscal analysis, design and environmental analysis.

Board members voting for these items were Supervisors Brian Veerkamp, John Hidahl, Shiva Frentzen and Sue Novasel. Supervisor Lori Parlin voted no.

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Printed in the September 04, 2020 edition on page A3 | Published on September 4, 2020 |

Last Modified on September 3, 2020 at 2:32 pm

Discussion | 1 comment

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Voters approved Prop. 68 to pay for some of these projects, and pay, you will. The billions raised through sales of bonds, plus the billions added for interest will be felt for a long time for anyone paying taxes. Then there is the added cost of maintainance and a future tax increase to keep these parks up. It would have been wiser to invest in what we could afford instead of borrowing on the future, but that is not how we do things in California. When this Proposition passed, the State was flush with cash and people had jobs. Now we are billions in the hole and a lot of people are on unemployment. I guess at least the homeless will have nice parks to live in if it comes to that.

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