



Legislation Text

File #: 19-1837, **Version:** 1

The Chief Administrative Office, Parks Division, recommends that the Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) receive an overview regarding the role of the Parks and Trails Master Plan, the River Management Plan, and the Saturated Soils Water Quality Protection Plan. These documents outline visions, goals and policies and provide direction to staff. (Est. Time: 30 Min.)

FUNDING: N/A

DISCUSSION / BACKGROUND

The Chief Administrative Office, Parks Division, recommends that the Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) receive an overview regarding the role of the Parks and Trails Master Plan, the River Management Plan, and the Saturated Soils Water Quality Protection Plan. These documents outline visions, goals and policies and provide direction to staff.

Parks and Trails Master Plan

The Parks and Recreation Element of the County's general plan (Pages 185 - 198) establishes general goals and policies to address the acquisition and development of regional, community, and neighborhood parks, provision of a trail system, the conservation and promotion of waterways for recreation, coordination with other recreation providers, securement of funding, and provision of opportunities to increase tourism. The Parks and Recreation Element is not required by law as a part of the General Plan. However, once an optional element is adopted, it carries the same importance as required elements. Per the General Plan, Policy 9.1.1.8, the County was required to prepare and implement the Parks and Trails Master Plan. The current Parks and Trails Master Plan was finalized in 2012, however, the plan is required to be regularly updated per the General Plan. The Master Plan was developed to provide a long term vision and direction for the planning, implementation, and management of the west slope park and trail resources provided by El Dorado County. The plan outlines visions, goals, and policies while also providing background, discussion, history, and an outline of existing park and trail resources, level of service, and operations and maintenance. The plan then provides a needs analysis, recommendation, and an implementation strategy. The Master Plan is essentially a road map for staff as it is a goal of the County to implement this plan. Staff acts in accordance with the plan to work towards its implementation. The PRC has two major roles as specified in the Master Plan. The first is to review the plan on a periodic basis and to recommend that the plan be updated as needed to reflect changes in recreation trends, project priorities, and user priorities (Section 9.4, sub-section AD10, Page 126). The second is to provide support to the County under the County's Quimby Act by reviewing tentative subdivision maps of fifty (50) parcels or more that are located outside the boundaries of special recreation of community services district and to provide recommendations to the Planning Commission for the provision of recreation services (Section 10.5, Page 144).

River Management Plan

The River Management Program is responsible for the implementation of the River Management Plan (RMP). The plan was originally adopted in 2001 and was updated in 2018. This program regulates commercial use and promotes education and safe river use for private users. This program

administers the established operational rules for commercial and private boaters on the South Fork of the American River. This program also administers health and safety objectives and embodies the County's intent to manage and support whitewater recreation while protecting the natural and social resources of the river. The El Dorado County General Plan objective 9.1.4 requires the conservation and promotion of the South Fork of the American River as an economic and recreational asset. The general plan identifies the RMP as the primary policy implementation and management plan of the South Fork that sets fourth the requirements and expectations for this program. The RMP goals, objectives, and elements are listed in Table 3 on pages 11 and 12 of the plan and the level of service required is listed in Chapter III of the Plan. Similar to the Master Plan, the RMP also serves as a road map for staff. However, the RMP is far more specific in nature, providing specific policies and procedures to staff to ensure its implementation. The Board of Supervisors has the sole authority to direct staff to move forward with environmental review to update the RMP and adopt future plans. The PRC's role in the River Management Plan is two-fold. First, the County may utilize the PRC for sharing of information and recommendations on the management of the South Fork of the American River and the implementation of the County RMP (Chapter III, Element 5, Page 29). Secondly, after the completion of each rafting season, the Parks and Trails Division will present a summary of the year's river management activity to the PRC in a public session (Chapter IV, Page 50).

Saturated Soils Water Quality Protection Plan

The Parks Division is also responsible for the maintenance and operations on the Rubicon Trail. While there is not a "Master Plan" for the Rubicon, the Rubicon Trail maintenance and operations is in compliance with the Saturated Soils Water Quality Protection Plan approved by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board. El Dorado County became aware of environmental issues on the Rubicon Trail in 2000. The Rubicon is in the watershed of the Upper American River Project (UARP) area. State Parks Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Commission, working with the Board of Supervisors, tasked the Parks Division with addressing the environmental concerns. The timeline below gives a brief overview of what has transpired with environmental issues on the Rubicon Trail and steps to rectify the issues:

- In 2004, the County closed Spider Lake because of sanitation issues.
- In 2008, El Dorado County installed a vault restroom at Loon Lake.
- On April 23, 2009, the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Water Board) issued a Cleanup and Abatement Order on the Rubicon Trail. This order had several issues that needed to be addressed: sanitation, sediment, education, maintenance and overall responsibility.
- In 2010, El Dorado County installed a vault restroom at Ellis Creek.
- In 2011, El Dorado County installed a 2,000 gallon septic tank to hold the waste from the restrooms on the trail.
- In 2012, Rubicon Trail Foundation (RTF) built a Unimog Pumper Truck to service the restrooms.
- In 2012, El Dorado County, with volunteers, installed 6 construction style restrooms at various locations on the trail.
- In 2012, El Dorado County accepted an easement from the US Forest Service for the Rubicon Trail, thereby accepting responsibility for maintenance and sanitation.
- In 2013, three more restrooms were installed at Buck Island.
- In October 10, 2014, the County adopted a sanitation plan for the Rubicon, and the Water Board rescinded the Cleanup and Abatement Order.

- In 2018 another restroom was installed at Buck Island.

The County is the responsible party based on the easement with the Forest Service and with the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board for the Rubicon Trail. The Saturated Soils Water Quality Protection Plan is the guiding document for staff to utilize best management practices (BMP's). Education on the Rubicon is also derived from the plan to ensure the protection of water quality. The County is obligated to meet Federal, State, and Local requirements for all maintenance and operations on the Rubicon Trail.

ALTERNATIVES

N/A

PRIOR BOARD ACTION

N/A

OTHER DEPARTMENT / AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

N/A

CAO RECOMMENDATION / COMMENTS

Chief Administrative Office concurs with the Parks Division recommendation.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

N/A

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT

Good Governance

CONTACT

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