



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 21-1199, **Version:** 1

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Chief Administrative Office, Parks Division, recommending the Board:

- 1) Receive and file a presentation on the final Chili Bar Feasibility Study and provide input to staff on the identified options; and
- 2) Direct staff to work with the American River Conservancy to determine potential options for management of the site and return to the Board no later than September 28, 2021.

**FUNDING:** SMUD Agreement Funds

### **DISCUSSION / BACKGROUND**

Chili Bar is a rafting/kayaking put-in downstream of the Highway 193 Bridge over the South Fork of the American River. The site is approximately 16 acres and is owned by El Dorado County. The lower area of the property, located adjacent to the river, is operated for rafting activities by the American River Conservancy (ARC) under the terms of a conservation easement. The upper level includes parking, structures, and the site of a previously-existing mobile home park. Chili Bar is a heavily-used access point for the South Fork of the American River.

The El Dorado County Parks and Trails Master Plan identifies the Chili Bar site as a Tier One Priority and identifies the need for the County to gather additional public input and finalize a plan for this site. The Parks and Recreation Commission recommended a scope of work for a Chili Bar Feasibility Study to include a full site assessment of the current infrastructure and deficiencies, public outreach, a detailed analysis for up to four conceptual alternatives, and a financial feasibility study. On June 23, 2020 (Legistar Item #20-0420), the Board approved funding to complete a study of the Chili Bar site.

The attached Feasibility and Constraints report and presentation by Helix Environmental Consulting provides information and options. All three designs include improved steps between the existing parking lot and lower terrace, two new accessible parking spaces and picnic area on lower terrace, and interpretive signs for public education. The Report contemplates site design, operations and management (O&M), and fiscal considerations.

The conceptual alternatives are as follows:

### **Option 1: Support River Access with Expanded Parking**

#### Design Features:

- Permanent Restroom
- Rebuild accessible patio
- Stabilize existing restroom/laundry building
- Demolish mobile home park infrastructure and seed with fire-wise native plants

Initial Implementation Cost: \$950,000

O&M Cost: \$23,000

Revenue/year: \$10,000 - \$25,200

Net Revenue: -\$8,000 - \$22,000

Site Management: County Staff or ARC, with a revised management agreement.

## Option 2: Day Use

### Design Features:

- Renovate restroom building
- Group and individual picnic areas
- Multi-use turf areas
- Accessible play area
- Accessible loop trail
- Parking lot
- Store with expanded patio, run by concessionaire
- Space for future storage building, improved stair and ramp between terraces

Initial Implementation Cost: \$2,245,000

O&M Cost: \$27,800

Revenue/year: \$31,000

Net Revenue: \$3,200

Site Management: County Staff or ARC, with a revised management agreement, and/or contract with a concessionaire for the store operation.

## Option 3: Camping

### Design Features:

- Renovate restroom building
- Store with expanded patio
- On-site camp steward in renovated house
- 9-13 high end campsites
- Covered group gathering area
- Improved stair and ramp between terraces.

Initial Implementation Cost: \$3,100,000

O&M Cost: \$53,500

Revenue/year: \$97,500

Net Revenue: \$44,000

Site Management: Campground Operation and/or ARC, with a revised management agreement, and/or contract with a concessionaire for the store operation.

Should the Board provide direction to pursue any of these conceptual designs, it would be necessary

to determine a new management arrangement for Chili Bar. Each option would require a change to the agreement with ARC. It is recommended that the Board direct staff to work with ARC to determine their preferred level of involvement with the site. Other possibilities for management of the site would include management by County Parks, or an agreement with a concessionaire for all or part of the site.

### **Parks and Recreation Commission Recommendation**

At their June 17, 2021 meeting, the Parks and Recreation Commission received a presentation on the final Feasibility Study and recommended that the Board of Supervisors direct staff pursue either direct county implementation or through grant funding as soon as possible restrooms, changing area, and potable water to be provided at Chili Bar, and as a second phase pursue inclusive amenities and access to the river. The Commission also recommended that staff and interested commissioners should meet with ARC to review how changes and management of river access might be improved as well as improved trail connectivity.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

The Board could choose to direct that staff pursue a different alternative for use of the site, or could direct that staff leave the site as-is.

### **PRIOR BOARD ACTION**

Legistar Item #20-0420, June 23, 2020

### **OTHER DEPARTMENT / AGENCY INVOLVEMENT**

County Counsel

### **CAO RECOMMENDATION / COMMENTS**

Provide direction to staff on the conceptual alternatives as requested.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

Funding for the Feasibility Study was funded by SMUD funds. Financial impact resulting from changes to the site or the management of the site could be substantial depending on the direction of the Board and the scope of the project. Applications for the site could be made under State Prop 68 Regional Parks or Rural and Recreational Tourism Grant opportunities, which may require a grant match of 20%. No other sources of funding have been identified for improvements to Chili Bar.

### **CLERK OF THE BOARD FOLLOW UP ACTIONS**

N/A

### **STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT**

Infrastructure

### **CONTACT**

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