

Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration

Project Title: Creekside Park
Project Location: 9725 Main Street, Monte Rio, California
Lead Agency: Monte Rio Recreation and Park District

As mandated by Section 15105 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, Monte Rio Recreation and Park District is circulating a Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration/Initial Study (MND/IS) for the Creekside Park project for public review and comment for a period of 30 days beginning February 9 and ending March 10, 2012.

The Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration/Initial Study is available for review at:

- *Sonoma County Library - Guerneville Branch*, 14107 Armstrong Woods Road, Guerneville
- *Monte Rio Community Center*, 20488 Highway 116, Monte Rio on Wednesdays from 11-1 or by arrangement; contact Peter Andrews at tuesdaypeter@sbcglobal.net
- *Monte Rio Recreation and Park District website* <http://www.mrrpd.org/>

The public is invited to submit written or email comments regarding the information, analysis, and mitigation measures in the Draft MND/IS **prior to March 10, 2012**, to Laura Saunders, Prunuske Chatham, Inc., 400 Morris Street, Suite G, Sebastopol, CA 95472 or lsaunders@pcz.com.

An **Open House** will be held to allow for review of project plans on **Wed., Feb. 22, 6-8 pm**, at the Monte Rio Community Center.

Project Description: The Monte Rio Recreation and Park District (MRRPD) plans to redevelop the site known as the Old Monte Rio Elementary School and to create recreational opportunities for both local residents and visitors that encompass a range of different interests and age levels. Along with improvements to the main property to create the new Creekside Park, connections will be developed to a network of trails in the larger area that ultimately link Monte Rio to the coast. The project will be implemented in two phases.

Phase I was funded as part of redevelopment in the lower Russian River area, with dedicated funds now administered by the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors, and will involve improvements to the landscape and structures, including a new skate park, community garden, public trail along the creek front, permeable parking, public restrooms, and a small concession café in the existing building with an outdoor dining patio. MRRPD envisions the tabled patio as the nexus of the project in the first phase, providing a way station for the bike routes in the area, as well as serving users of the skating, gardening, and trail facilities.

Currently, funding is secured for Phase I only, which requires final approval from the MRRPD Board of Directors and regulatory agencies. Phase II is more tentative, still requiring access agreements, planning of some trail elements, funding, and approval by numerous agencies. However, enough details of what would occur in Phase II exist to allow initial examination of potential impacts in this document; further assessments will be made when funding is obtained.

Phase II would include additional improvements to Creekside Park and connections to a trail system that would accommodate hiking, cycling, and possibly equestrian uses if proposed trail grades are not too steep and trailer parking is available. The trail would connect inland areas to Sonoma Coast State Park above Willow Creek. Phase II building improvements would include raising all habitable areas above the base flood elevation, a trailhead orientation center, administration office, and additional restrooms. The existing gymnasium would be renovated to include the Russian River Watershed Adventure Center with a watershed presentation room, watershed exhibit hall, exhibit orientation area, and exhibit storage area. Site improvements would include expanded parking and restoration of Schoolhouse Creek. MRRPD also intends to accommodate a weekly farmers market in the entry court between the watershed exhibit hall and the community garden. The trail system connection route would climb through the Sweetwater Springs Water District (SSWD) tank property, through other SSWD and/or Mendocino Redwoods land, and ultimately onto the Willow Creek unit of Sonoma Coast State Park. The trails would have associated way stations with benches, picnic tables, and open areas to provide access to overlook corridors and view sheds to the floor of the Dutch Bill Creek watershed below.

MRRPD envisions Creekside Park, Russian River Watershed Adventure Center, and the new trail system and its amenities as a unique recreational opportunity for both local users and visiting tourists.

Board Action: The Board of Directors intends to consider the Draft MND/ISC, public comments received during the public review period, and public comments at their regular meeting on April 2, 2012, at 6 pm at the Community Center.