



NOTICE OF THE WATERSHED COMMITTEE MEETING/SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Thursday, February 29, 2024 at 6:00 PM

AGENDA

LOCATIONS:

Open Session to start at or after 6:00 p.m.

City of San Rafael, City Council Chambers – 1400 Fifth Avenue, San Rafael, CA 94901

Public Participation:

The public may attend this meeting in-person or remotely using the following methods:

On a computer or smart device, go to: <https://marinwater.zoom.us/j/88484448194>

By phone, dial: **1-669-444-9171** and use Webinar ID: **884 8444 8194**

HOW TO PROVIDE PUBLIC COMMENT:

During the Meeting: Typically, you will have 3 minutes to make your public comment, however, the board president may shorten the amount of time for public comment due to a large number of attendees. Furthermore, pursuant to Government Code, section 54954.2 (the Brown Act), the Board may not take action or discuss any item that does not appear on the agenda.

-- **In-Person Attendee:** Fill out a speaker card and provide to the board secretary. List the number/letter (ex: 6a) of the agenda item(s), for which you would like to provide a comment. Once you're called, proceed to the lectern to make your comment.

-- **Remote Attendee:** Use the "raise hand" button on the bottom of the Zoom screen. If you are joining by phone and would like to comment, press *9. The board secretary will use the last four digits of your phone number to call on you (dial *6 to mute/unmute).

In Advance of the Meeting: Submit your comments by email in advance of the meeting to boardcomment@marinwater.org. To ensure that your comment is provided to the Board of Directors prior to the meeting, please email your comment 24 hours in advance of the meeting start time. Comments received after this cut off time will be sent to the Board after the meeting. Please do not include personal information in your comment such as phone numbers and home addresses.

AGENDA ITEMS:

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

2. Adoption of Agenda

3. Regular Item

- a.** Draft Watershed Recreation Management Planning Feasibility Study

RECOMMENDATION: No action to be taken. Receive a staff presentation of the draft Watershed Recreation Management Planning Feasibility Study

4. Upcoming Meeting

The next Watershed Committee Meeting/Special Meeting of the Board of Directors is on Thursday, March 21 at 9:30 a.m.

5. Adjournment

ADA NOTICE AND HEARING-IMPAIRED PROVISIONS




In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and California Law, it is Marin Water's policy to offer its public programs, services, and meetings in a manner that is readily accessible to everyone, including those with disabilities. If you are an individual with a disability and require a copy of a public hearing notice, an agenda, and/or agenda packet in an appropriate alternative format, or if you require other accommodations, please contact the Board Secretary/ADA Coordinator at 415.945.1448, at least two business days in advance of the meeting. Advance notification will enable Marin Water to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility.

Information agendas are available for review at the Civic Center Library, Corte Madera Library, Fairfax Library, Mill Valley Library, City of San Rafael City Hall, Marin Water Administration Building, and marinwater.org.

Posted: 02-23-2024



STAFF REPORT

Meeting Type: Watershed Committee/Board of Directors
Title: Draft Watershed Recreation Management Planning Feasibility Study
From: Shaun Horne, Director of Watershed Resources 
Through: Ben Horenstein, General Manager 
Meeting Date: February 29, 2024 

TYPE OF ACTION: Action X Information Review and Refer

RECOMMENDATION: No action to be taken. Receive a staff presentation of the draft Watershed Recreation Management Planning Feasibility Study

SUMMARY: The Main Municipal Water District (District) partnered with the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy (GGNPC) to engage District Board members, executive leadership, stakeholders, and constituents in early scoping of a Watershed Recreation Management Plan (Plan). At the February 18, 2022 Board of Directors meeting, the Board approved a contract with Alta Planning to complete a Watershed Visitor Census Survey and develop of a Watershed Recreation Management Plan Feasibility Study. Since June 2022, the District has hosted six (6) community workshops, two (2) site visits, and completed an updated watershed census survey to solicit input relating to watershed operations and visitor management. Staff will provide a presentation on the Watershed Recreation Management Planning Feasibility Study.

DISCUSSION: Mt. Tamalpais and its adjacent watersheds support a rich array of plants and animals, panoramic vistas, and recreational opportunities that are treasured by residents and visitors alike. Since before the turn of the last century, Mt. Tamalpais has been a magnet for recreationists. The Marin Municipal Water District’s Mt. Tamalpais watershed lands receive approximately 2 million visitors annually and are part of the Golden Gate Biosphere Reserve (UNESCO 2002). Watershed users include anglers, hikers, equestrians, nature viewers, runners, walkers, youth camps, cyclists and many more. With the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic and associated Shelter in Place Orders the number of watershed visitors drastically increased, overwhelming many of the District’s facilities (restrooms, parking lots, trash receptacles and popular trails). This dramatic increase in users demonstrates the significant value of natural areas and open space lands to the community and the community’s deep connection to these areas. However, this increase in visitors also accentuated long-standing watershed issues relating to existing facilities and between different visitor groups.

Currently, the District has two overarching management plans for the watershed: the Roads and Trails Management Plan (RTMP) and the Biodiversity, Fires, and Fuels Integrated Plan (BFFIP). The primary goals and objectives of the RTMP is to protect water quality through the application of best management practices for roads and trails maintenance, while the BFFIP focuses on the actions that the District will implement to reduce fire hazards to protect water quality and maintain and enhance ecosystem function. Neither of these plans directly address recreational activities on the watershed. A Watershed Recreation Management Plan Feasibility Study will evaluate current watershed use patterns and opportunities to support safe, inclusive use with an emphasis on protecting the watershed's unique biodiversity, habitat, and water quality. The aim is to facilitate safe community access supported by appropriate regulations, facilities, partnerships, stewardship programs, and signage, which collectively will help protect the District watershed lands.

Watershed Recreation Management Planning Feasibility Study

The planning process has been designed to facilitate a conversation with the community around existing visitation in an effort to help address long-standing issues around various modes of recreation on Mt. Tamalpais. The Feasibility Study reviews existing watershed recreational facilities, visitor use data, biological resources, stewardship and volunteer programs, and visitor management strategies. The planning process aligns with the District's adaptive watershed management strategy and is informing multi-benefit outcomes that can be advanced to help protect the unique goals of different watershed visitors and the biodiversity of the District's watershed lands. The Feasibility Study identifies various Strategic Opportunities that could be pursued to work towards a future desired condition to address various recreation related issues. These Strategic Opportunities have been identified for future consideration and adoption by the Board.

The final section of the Feasibility Study presents a series of Strategic Opportunities organized around stewardship initiatives, visitor services, watershed facilities, and adaptive management operations. Some of these efforts align with the current Watershed Roads and Trails Management Plan. While others require longer-term efforts and additional environmental review prior to adoption and implementation. Staff will present the Feasibility Study to the Watershed Committee and is requesting direction on near term and long-term priorities. The District will bring the Feasibility Study to the March 21, 2024 Watershed Committee meeting to review and refer the document to a future regular board meeting so that the Board may consider accepting the final Study as a blueprint to pursue implementation of the various Strategic Opportunities.

The District has developed a webpage to keep the community updated on the planning process, and the Feasibility Study can also be viewed on this webpage, beginning on Monday, February 26 by going online to marinwater.org/WatershedRecPlan.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW: Not applicable.

FISCAL IMPACT: None.

ATTACHMENT(S): None.