



AG + OPEN SPACE
SONOMA COUNTY

SONOMA COUNTY OPEN SPACE DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA

Online Meeting Due to Sonoma County's Shelter in Place Order

Friday, November 20, 2020 | 10:00 am

MEMBERS PLEASE CALL IF UNABLE TO ATTEND

In accordance with Executive Order N-29-20, the November 20, 2020 Advisory Committee meeting will be held virtually via Zoom.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC MAY NOT ATTEND THIS MEETING IN PERSON

***UPDATE REGARDING VIEWING AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN
November 20, 2020 ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING***

The November 20, 2020 Advisory Committee Meeting will be held online through Zoom. There will be no option for attending in person. Members of the public can watch or listen to the meeting using one of the following methods:

Join the Zoom meeting on your computer, tablet or smartphone by clicking:

<https://sonomacounty.zoom.us/j/98415250727?pwd=aGlpWG5UM3Y5WW5yTTtCbWx1NTdlZz09>

1. If you have the Zoom app or web client, join the meeting using the Password: 262562
2. Call-in and listen to the meeting: Dial 1 669 900 9128 Enter meeting ID: 984 1525 0727

PUBLIC COMMENT DURING THE MEETING: You may email public comment to Mariah.Robson@sonoma-county.org. All emailed public comments will be forwarded to all Committee Members and read aloud for the benefit of the public. Please include your name and the relevant agenda item number to which your comment refers. In addition, if you have joined as a member of the public through the Zoom link or by calling in, there will be specific points throughout the meeting during which live public comment may be made via Zoom and phone.

DISABLED ACCOMMODATION: If you have a disability which requires an accommodation or an alternative format to assist you in observing and commenting on this meeting, please contact Mariah Robson by email to Mariah.Robson@sonoma-county.org by 12pm Thursday, November 19, 2020 to ensure arrangements for accommodation.

END OF UPDATE

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Consideration of a Letter on PG&E Settlement Funds Attachment A**
Bill Keene, General Manager
3. **Projects in Negotiation Attachment B**
4. **Adjournment**
Next Scheduled Meeting: December 10, 2020

*** FUTURE MEETING TOPICS**
(SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

11/26/20

Thanksgiving Break

12/10/20

Matching Grant Program Recommendations
Extreme Events: Wildfire

1/28/21

Acquisition Update
Fire and Fuel Loading
VLI Implementation Strategy

2/25/21

Admin Fiscal Update
Legislative Update





AG + OPEN SPACE
SONOMA COUNTY

Attachment “A”

DRAFT LETTER TO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS FROM CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
(letterhead)

Date

RE: Use of PG&E Settlement Funds
Chair Gorin and members of the Board of Supervisors:

The Citizens Advisory Committee is proud of all that Sonoma County Ag + Open Space, a taxpayer-funded special district, has accomplished over the years to permanently protect the unique and special lands in Sonoma County, for agriculture, natural resource, scenic and open space, and recreational value. These lands are our legacy to future generations, and their permanent protection is foundational to enhancing our region’s resiliency to climate change. We understand your Board is closing in on a decision in terms of the use of PG&E settlement funds. Ag + Open Space incurred damages to fee land and conservation easement interests from the 2017 fires, and the PG&E settlement recognized and is based in part on those damages. Ag + Open Space is a unique public entity that can deliver services to both public agencies and private landowners across the entire county. We see three main areas where Ag + Open Space could be extremely effective in the strategic use of PG&E settlement funding to facilitate vegetation management and increased resiliency across private and public lands across Sonoma County.

First, focus and expand our land conservation work to permanently protect strategic properties within identified fire prone areas, using available planning, data analysis, and partnerships, where land protection actions would have the greatest strategic impact. This effort would build upon and implement existing and pending Community Wildfire Protection Plans and other resources developed and in process by other County agencies and departments, as well as other partnering fire safety, academic, federal, state, and local government, non-governmental organizations. Ag + Open Space is experienced in negotiating and closing conservation easement acquisitions, and in responsibly stewarding those easements in perpetuity. Easement terms could be negotiated that require landowner adherence to fuels reduction best management practices as articulated by fire agencies, Natural Resource Conservation Service, and local Resource Conservation Districts. Making protected lands available for carbon sequestration and other innovative mitigation initiatives would bring Sonoma County closer to ‘carbon zero’.

XXXX

[Name]

[Date]

Page 2

Second, coordinate a grant program for existing and future conservation easement landowners (approximately **xxxxxx acres or more than 10%** of the land in Sonoma County is currently protected by Ag + Open Space conservation easements). Approximately 25,000 acres protected with Ag + Open Space-held conservation easements have been directly affected by fire since 2017. Small grants could be provided to conservation easement landowners (private farmers and ranchers, conservationists, as well as public landowners like cities and park entities) for vegetation management projects to reduce fuel loading and enhance ecosystem health. Use of existing Matching Grant Program templates and a streamlined application process would minimize additional administrative costs. To date, working with our Board and the community, the Matching Grant Program has successfully **awarded nearly \$\$\$\$** to projects across the county.

Third, use PG&E settlement funds to establish and maintain fuel breaks as part of a strategic, regional approach to protect our communities. This work would occur at key anchor Ag + Open Space owned and managed properties, as well as across multiple neighboring properties under various ownerships. Ag + Open Space has a track record of successfully working with various agencies, contractors, community-based organizations and volunteers to accomplish land management work to reduce fuel loading and to enhance ecological health of the properties that we own and manage. Working cooperatively with neighboring landowners to create and maintain a regional, multi parcel shaded fuel break, in partnership with Calfire and others, would expand the reach of the settlement funding to help meet the common purpose of protecting our communities from wildfire events.

Ag + Open Space has the proven capability to leverage PG&E settlement funds, along with the current and proposed community fire safety planning and vegetation planning efforts proposed by Calfire and local fire agencies, Permit Sonoma, Sonoma Water, UC Cooperative Extension, Sonoma and Goldridge Resource Conservation Districts, Rebuild Northbay, and many others, to protect the lands most critical for increasing resilience to climate change and future extreme events in Sonoma County.

In closing, we believe the District can serve you and the citizens of Sonoma County by using its share of these funds for pre-disaster actions that will benefit the common good. In recognition of the urgency of this issue, and with Board direction, Ag + Open Space can immediately pivot existing staff towards the above-described work, until the Board authorizes additional staff resources to support this work on a longer-term basis.

Sincerely,

Chair...

Project Status Chart
11/13/2020

Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District

PROJECT	Acreage (approximate)	Supervisory District	Acquisition Plan Category	Project Design	Appraisal Process	Approvals/Baseline	Escrow	Comments
Arrowhead Ranch (Maas)	245	2	Farms & Ranches	x				On hold at request of owner
Bay Area Ranchers Coop	17	1	Farms & Ranches	x				Initiating project
El Recreo	289	1	Greenbelts & Scenic Hillside	x	x			Appraisal process
Joseph Camozzi Dairy	403	2	Farms & Ranches	x	x			SALCP grant.
LaFranchi (Oak Ridge Angus)	1,189	4	Farms & Ranches	x				CE under negotiation
Mattos Dairy	701	2	Farms & Ranches	x	x	x	x	SALCP grant.
McClelland Dairy	337	2	Farms & Ranches	x				On hold at request of owner
McCormick	253	1	Water, Wildlife & Natural Areas	x	x			Appraisal process
Paulin Meadow (Parcel J)	10	3	Water, Wildlife & Natural Areas	x	x			CE under negotiation
Preston Farm	133	4	Farms & Ranches	x				CE under negotiation
Sonoma Developmental Center 5 (Transfor	945	1	Greenbelts & Scenic Hillside					Land protection proposal underway
Torr - West	316	5	Recreation & Education	x	x	x	x	Escrow has closed.
Witt Home Ranch	395	2	Farms & Ranches					Initiating project
Total Acres:	5,233							

Matching Grant Projects	Acreage (approximate)	Supervisory District	Location	Begin Grant Process	Appraisal Process	Approvals/Baseline	Escrow	Comments
AmeriCorps Trail	12	5	Sebastopol		n/a			Initiating project
Andy's Unity Park	4	5	Southwest Santa Rosa	x				Escrow closed in 2017. Tracking match
Badger Park	20	4	Healdsburg					Initiating project
Bayer Farm Development***	6**	5	Southwest Santa Rosa	x	x	x	x	Reimbursement ongoing, Grant term extended
Colgan Creek Phase 3 MG***	7	5	Southwest Santa Rosa	x	n/a	x	x	Extension granted to 10/14/21
Crane Creek Regional Trail*	6	1	East of Rohnert Park	x	n/a			Drafting documents. Grant extended to 12/6/21
Denman Reach	2	2	North Petaluma	x	n/a			Drafting documents
Falletti Ranch	4	2	Cotati	x	x	x	x	Tracking match
Forever Forestville***	4	5	Downtown Forestville	x	x	x	x	Tracking match
Graton Green	1	5	Downtown Graton	x	x	x		Escrow closed April 5, 2019. Tracking match.
Guerneville River Park Phase 2***	5	5	Central Guerneville	x	x	x		Initiating project; processing extension request
Helen Putnam Regional Park Extension	56	2	Petaluma					Initiating project
Maxwell Farms	79	1	Northwest of Sonoma	x	n/a			Drafting Documents
McNear Peninsula Addition	21	2	Petaluma					Drafting documents
Paula Lane Open Space Preserve	11	2	West Petaluma	x	x	x	x	Tracking match
River Lane***	1	5	West of Guerneville	x	x	x	x	Finalizing docs; Grant extended to 10/25/24
Riverfront Regional Park Recreation Impro	300**	4	West of Windsor	x	n/a			Initiating project; processing extension request
Roseland Creek Community Park - Phase 1	3	5	Southwest Santa Rosa	x	x			City is reviewing documents (CE, RC)
Roseland Village Public Space***	1	5	Southwest Santa Rosa	x	n/a			Drafting documents
Southeast Santa Rosa Greenway***	61	1	Southeast Santa Rosa	x		x		Initiating project; project extended to 10/25/24
SMART Pathway – Hearn to Bellevue*	6	5	Southwest Santa Rosa	x	n/a	x		Finalizing documents
SMART Pathway - Payran to S. Point	14	2	Petaluma	x	n/a			SMART is reviewing documents (CE, RC)
Steamer Landing Park Development (McNe	27**	2	Downtown Petaluma	x	n/a			Initiating project
Taylor Mtn RPOSP - Cooper Creek Addition	54	3	Southeast Santa Rosa	x				Closed 4/1/20. Tracking match
Total Acres:	236							

* District approved a 2-year extension

** Restoration/Development Project on previous acquisition.