



AG + OPEN SPACE
SONOMA COUNTY

SONOMA COUNTY OPEN SPACE DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

October 26, 2023 | 5:00 pm

MEMBERS PLEASE CALL IF UNABLE TO ATTEND

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC MAY PARTICIPATE VIA ZOOM OR IN PERSON

The September 28, 2023 Sonoma County Ag + Open Space Advisory Committee meeting will be held in person at Ag + Open Space's office located at 747 Mendocino Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA. The public may also participate virtually through Zoom.

Members of the public can watch or listen to the meeting using one of the two following methods:

1. **Zoom:** Join the Zoom meeting on your computer, tablet or smartphone by clicking: <https://sonomacounty.zoom.us/j/98316944769?pwd=MURud1o3TDVRRWStOSEF5Z25MdElzdz09>

If you have the Zoom app or web client, join the meeting using the Password: 778144

Call-in and listen to the meeting: Dial 1 669 900 9128 Enter meeting ID: 983 1694 4769

2. **In Person:** Members of the public may attend in person at Ag + Open Space's office at 747 Mendocino Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA in the large conference room.

PUBLIC COMMENT DURING THE MEETING: You may email public comment to Michelle.Nozzari@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 Michelle Nozzari by email to Michelle.Nozzari@sonoma-county.org by 12pm Wednesday, October 25, 2023 to ensure arrangements for accommodation.

1. **Call to Order**

2. **Public Comment**

Comments on items not listed on the agenda. Time is limited to 2 minutes per person/item.

3. **Approval of Minutes from September 28, 2023 Attachment A ACTION ITEM**

4. **General Manager's Report**

5. **Subcommittee Report Out**

6. **Acquisition Update**

INFORMATIONAL ITEM

Jennifer Kuszmar, Acquisition Manager

7. **Projects in Negotiations Attachment B**

8. **Announcements from Advisory Committee Members**

9. **Adjournment**

Next Scheduled Meeting: December 14, 2023

FUTURE MEETING TOPICS
(SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

12/14/23

Buy, Protect, Sell Program Materials

1/25/24

TBD





AG + OPEN SPACE
SONOMA COUNTY

SONOMA COUNTY OPEN SPACE DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

747 Mendocino Avenue – Suite 100, Santa Rosa, CA 95401
September 28, 2023 | 5:00 pm

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Paul Martin	Ladi Asgill	Steve Rabinowitsh	Thembi Borrás
Bill Smith	Wendy Eliot	Mark Stapp	John Shribbs
Kevin McDonnell	Don McEnhill	Dayna Ghirardelli	Josh Proctor

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Jan McFarland Kristina Tierney Jesús Guzmán Angel Lopez Michelle Whitman

STAFF PRESENT:

Misti Arias, General Manager; Lisa Pheatt, County Counsel; Amy Ricard, Community Resources Manager; Pamela Swan, Grants Coordinator; Sara Ortiz, Administrative Aide; Michelle Nozzari, Administrative Aide.

Call to Order

Chair Thembi Borrás called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

Public Comment

No comment.

Approval of Minutes from August 24, 2023

Chair Borrás asked for any comments or revisions to the August 24, 2023, minutes. Wendy Eliot noted that she did not attend the meeting and was not listed as absent. Chair Borrás took roll call. A vote took place to approve the minutes with this correction. Wendy Eliot abstained from the voting; the minutes were approved with the corrections.

General Manager's Report

Upcoming Board Items

10/24 MGP Program Guideline & Process – Review new draft guidelines/app process.
11/7 Spring Hill Ranch CE Acquisition
Environmental Services Contracts

Fourth Round of Grant Funding to be Awarded 2024 and Position Allocation
12/12 Mark West Wikiup OSP Fee Title Purchase and CE Acquisition
MGP Program Guideline & Process – Adoption of new draft guidelines/app process
Land Management Services Contracts

The General Manager welcomed new Acquisition Assistant, Simon Apostol. Mr. Apostol has previous experience as a Natural Area Manager at the Columbia Land Trust in Vancouver, WA where he led several conservation, management, and restoration projects including acting a lead for the Kwoneesum Dam removal project. Mr. Apostol also has extensive experience as an ecologist and has GIS expertise that will benefit the District.

Stewardship Endowment Update: Ag + Open Space received direction from the Board of Supervisors to work with Auditor Controller Treasurer Tax collector (ACTTC) to develop an Ag + Open Space endowment account, to lobby for legislative change to amend the way the district is able to invest funds, and to create a investment strategy for this endowment. Members of the Advisory Committee attended the meeting and gave public comment.

In September, Ag + Open Space closed on the purchase of a conservation easement over the 209-acre Soda Springs Ranch Open Space Preserve property in Cloverdale. The City of Cloverdale will convey a conservation easement and recreation conservation covenant to Ag + Open Space and will manage the property for natural resource protection and recreation.

The Gillis Ranch Preserve is set to close early next month. It is a 140-acre property adjacent to the Nahmens conservation easement (site of the Duckworth Family farm) and Cunningham Marsh.

The Fiscal Oversight Commission has recently approved the LaFranchi Laguna, Spring Hill, and Armstrong Redwoods - Ayers projects. These projects will be moving forward to the Board of Directors.

Ag + Open Space has initiated a new project, Russian River Redwoods (previously Silver Estates – a nearly 400-acre property that was slated for timber harvest. Save the Redwoods League is in contract to purchase the property by the end of September. Ag + Open Space is partnering with the League and the County to conservation this property and transfer it to a County entity with an estimated closing timeframe of late 2024.

Subcommittee Appointments and Report Outs

Report Outs

- Acquisition Subcommittee – Subcommittee has not met.
- Agricultural Subcommittee – Subcommittee has not met but plans to meet in late October or early November.
- Endowment Subcommittee – Has met three times. Chair Borrás attended Stewardship Update to the Board on September 19, 2023. She provided public comment and expressed support for the districted recommended actions to develop a fund, create a funding strategy, and work with consultants to change investment legislation.



- Matching Grant APPLICATION EVALUATION Subcommittee – has met and reviewed applications. The Committee’s work has concluded for the year.
- Matching Grant REVISION Subcommittee – The subcommittee met to review recommended changes to the Matching Grant and is in support of the recommendations.

Subcommittee Appointments to Vacant Positions

Chair Borrás went over subcommittee vacancies and took a vote to appoint interested members to each subcommittee. The following members were appointed by unanimous vote.

- John Schribbs was appointed to the Acquisition Subcommittee vacancy.
- Ladi Asgill and Danya Ghirardelli were appointed to the Agricultural Subcommittee vacancies.
- Kevin McDonnell was appointed to the Endowment Subcommittee vacancy.
- Matching Grant REVISION Subcommittee: No vacancy.
- John Schribbs was appointed to the Matching Grant Application Evaluation Subcommittee vacancy. The Community Resources Manager noted that the work of this subcommittee concluded.

Matching Grant Program Revisions

Amy Ricard, Community Resources Program Manager, and Pamela Swan, Grants Coordinator, presented recommended revisions to the Matching Grant Program. A discussion took place and Advisory Committee members provided insight and additional recommendations. Chair Borrás open discussion for public comment.

George Horwell echoed support for matching grant revisions to include a transparency information including information about the amount of funds spent for each project to date annually.

Susan Kirks, representing Paula Lane Action Network and Madrone Audubon Society, emphasized importance of empathy for community in this process. The Matching Grant process can feel like an unfriendly process those who are first time applicants. It is important to prioritize equity. She advocated for no minimum threshold.

Projects in Negotiation

The Advisory Committee members reviewed the Projects in Negotiation Spreadsheet. Member Paul Martin noted that some of the abbreviations were confusing.

Announcements

- Member Mark Stapp announced that he and Mayor Rogers will be at Spring Lake Middle School giving a presentation on the Southeast Santa Rosa Greenway.
- Member Kevin McDonnell announced that the City of Petaluma is opening an access way to Steamer Landing to the D street community.
- Member John Shribbs announced the City of Petaluma received a \$200,000 grant to plant trees in parks and neighborhoods.



From the Public

- George Horwell, a concerned member of the public, advocated for the protection and purchase of Petrified Forest which is now for sale. He noted that property could be turned into outdoor summer camp facility if purchased by an entity like a school district. He noted it would be a shame to lose this natural wonder for future generations.
- Susan Kirks announced that the local Coastal Plan will be going before the board at the end of the year.

Adjournment

Chair Borrás adjourned the meeting at 7:00pm

Next Meeting: October 26, 2023

This meeting will be in person with an option for members of the public to join via zoom. The meeting place is: 747 Mendocino Ave, Ste 100, Large Conference Room, Santa Rosa

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Nozzari
Advisory Committee Clerk



Conservation Easement Project Name	Acreage (approx)	Sup. District	Project Phases								Status	Comments
			Step 1	Step 2			Step 3		Step 4			
Abril Ranch	1,929	4									On-Hold	Stalled due to federal mineral rights ownership
Armstrong Redwoods State Natural Reserve - Ayers Addition	320	5									Approvals/Baseline	Anticipated BOD date: 12/5
Baumert Springs	372	5									Negotiating CE	FOC date 11/2 anticipated BOD date 12/12
Bavarian Lion Vineyards	1,858	4									Initiating Project	Initiating Project
Bianchi Family	633	5									Initiating Project	Initiating Project
Big Sulphur Creek (Krasilsa)	507	4									Initiating Project	Initiating Project
Blucher Creek Headwaters	212	5									Initiating Project	Project back to active - initiating project structure
Chanslor Ranch (fee acquisition)	378	5								+	Approvals/Baseline	Final negotiation
Crawford Gulch	92	5									Initiating Project	Project Structure - development
Deniz Ernest & Beverly Trust	217	2									Initiating Project	Project Structure - development
Deniz Family Farm	315	2									Initiating Project	Project Structure - development
Denner Ranches	489	5									Approvals/Baseline	Finalizing baseline and escrow instructions
Diamond W Ranch	849	2									Negotiating CE	Project Structure - CE drafting
Gillis Ranch Preserve	139	2 & 5									Escrow/Closing	Estimated closing date: 10/20
Hood Mountain Regional Park & Open Space Preserve - Salt Creek Addition	989	1									Appraisal Process	FOC date 11/2 anticipated BOD date 12/12
Lafranchi (Laguna)	127	5									Approvals/Baseline	Anticipated BOD date: 12/5
Limping Turkey Ranch	158	2									Initiating Project	Initiating project
Lobban – Creekside Addition	3	1									Appraisal Process	Working on project structure
Lobban – Mark West Creek	266	1									Appraisal Process	Working on project structure
Lobban – Miyashiro Addition	5	1									Appraisal Process	Appraisal phase - appraisal under review
Mark West Wikiup Preserve	31	4									Negotiating CE	Draft Purchase and Sale (PSA) out, CE out negotiations +
McClelland Dairy	348	2									Negotiating CE	Project Structure -- negotiating CE language
McCormick Ranch - Regional Parks	253	1						+			Approvals/Baseline	FOC date 11/2 anticipated BOD date 12/12
Nolan Creek 1	317	5				+					Initiating Project	Project Structure - development
Nolan Creek 2	171	5				+					Initiating Project	Project Structure - development
Nolan Creek 3	49	5				+					Initiating Project	Project Structure - development
Peters Ranch	278	2									Initiating Project	Project Structure - development
Preston Farm	133	4									Negotiating CE	Project Structure - development and CE negotiations
Rincon Hills	218	1									Initiating Project	Project Structure - development
Rowland Mack	168	1					+				Negotiating CE	Project Structure - development and CE negotiations
Russian River Redwoods	394	5			+	+					Initiating Project	Project Structure - development
Spring Hill Ranch	579	2						+			Appraisal Process	Appraisal update. Landowner seeking ACCs.
Starrett Hill	319	5									Initiating Project	Project Structure - development
South Sonoma Mountain - Grove	369	2									Initiating Project	Initiating project

Conservation Easement Project Name	Acreage (approx)	Sup. District	Project Phases										Status	Comments
			Step 1	Step 2			Step 3			Step 4				
			Project Evaluation	Initiating Project	Due Dilligence	Project Structure	CE Negotiations	Appraisal Process	FOC	BOD	Escrow/Closing			
South Sonoma Mountain - Skyline	492	2				+						Initiating Project	Project Structure - development	
South Sonoma Mountain - Rodgers Creek	798	1 & 2				+						Initiating Project	Project Structure - development	
Willow Avenue Farm	8	2			+	+						Initiating Project	Project Structure - development	
Witt Home Ranch	395	2										Initiating Project	Initiating project	
Wolf Creek Ranch	1,195	5										Initiating Project	Initiating project	
Total Acres	16,645													

+ indicates change in phase since last update (September 2023)

Matching Grant Project Name	Acreage (approx)	Sup. District	Project Progress										Status	Comments
			Project Evaluation	Initiating Project	Due Diligence	Project Structure	CE Negotiations	Appraisal Process	FOC	BOD	Escrow/ Closing	Implementation + Tracking Match		
			Step 1	Step 2			Step 3			Step 4	Step 5			
A Place to Play	87	5											Initiating Project	Initiating project
AmeriCorps Trail	12	5											Other	Implementation - CE/RC will be recorded following trail construction.
Badger Park	20	4											Initiating Project	Site Assessment in process for project documentation
Bayer Farm Development ***	6**	3			N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		Completed Project & Tracking Match	Reimbursement ongoing; Grant extended
Bodega Bay Trail	178	5											Initiating Project	Site Assessment in process for project documentation
Colgan Creek Phase 4 MG	4	3											Initiating Project	Accepted into program during 2022 MGP funding cycle
Crane Creek Regional Trail	75	1											Negotiating CE	Negotiating CE, Rec Covenant, Mtg to align around MGA agreement
Denman Reach	2	2											Negotiating CE	Negotiating CE
Geyserville Community Plaza	1	4		+									Initiating Project	Board approved 8/22/2023
Healdsburg Montage Park	36	4				+							Initiating Project	Getting out LOI / MGA
Helen Putnam Regional Park Extension	56	2					+						Negotiating CE	Revised LOI under review by landowner
Helen Putnam Regional Park Extension Phase 2	47	2											Negotiating CE	LOI under review by landowner
Keiser Park Expansion 2	2	4						+					Appraisal Process	Initiating appraisal review
Mark West Community Park	1	4		+									Initiating Project	Board approved 8/22/2023
Maxwell Farms	79	1											Initiating Project	Drafting Documents
Petaluma Bounty Community Farm	3	2		+									Initiating Project	Board approved 8/22/2023
Petaluma River Park	20	2											Initiating Project	Letter of intent in negotiation
River Lane***	1	5											Escrow/Closing	Moving toward close;complaintant issues; 10/25/24 extension
Roseland Creek Community Park - Phase 1c	3	3											Negotiating CE	Negotiating CE, Rec Covenant
Sonoma Schellville Trail	21	1											Initiating Project	Board approved 8/22/2023
Southeast Santa Rosa Greenway***	61	1					+						Negotiating CE	Appraisal done. Mtg w City to align docs and timeline
Steamer Landing Park Development (McNear Peninsula)	27**	2				+							Initiating Project	Initiating project
Tierra de Rosas Plaza	1	3		+									Initiating Project	Board approved 8/22/2023
Total Acres	710													

* District approved a 2-year extension

** Restoration/Development Project on previous acquisition.

*** District approved 5-year extension (MGP 2 year, fire 3 year)

+ indicates change in phase since last update (September 2023)

