



County of Monterey

Board of Supervisors
Chambers
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor
Salinas, CA 93901

Legislation Details (With Board Report)

File #: 17-0216 **Name:** Lakes Strategy 2017
Type: General Agenda Item **Status:** Agenda Ready
File created: 2/27/2017 **In control:** Parks Commission
On agenda: 3/6/2017 **Final action:**
Title: a. Receive an update on Lakes Operations for the 2017 program year;
b. Provide direction to staff

Sponsors:

Indexes:

Code sections:

Attachments: 1. Lakes Map

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
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- a. Receive an update on Lakes Operations for the 2017 program year;
- b. Provide direction to staff

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Parks Committee:

- a. Receive an update on Lakes Operations for the 2017 program year;
- b. Provide direction to staff

SUMMARY:

Beginning 2014, all Parks facilities at Lake San Antonio (LSA) were closed due to water levels dropping below 30%. Around that time, Monterey County entered into an agreement with CalParks to manage park operations and maintain County lake facilities at LSA and Lake Nacimiento. That agreement was extended for an additional 2-year term through October 2017.

In July 2016, the Board of Supervisors (BOS) named the RMA Director as Interim Director of Parks and requested staff to open Lake San Antonio (LSA). RMA provided a limited opening of LSA South Shore starting with the weekend of August 5, 2016. This was a “soft opening” that included limited camping areas and restricted boating on weekends only. Within a few weeks of opening, the Chimney Fire resulted in closing operations for the weekend of August 26th through 28th. LSA South Shore was reopened through Labor Day Weekend and then was closed for the winter.

The Parks Department FY 2016-17 Adopted Budget, which was created prior to Parks being integrated into RMA, did not anticipate the reopening of LSA operations and included no funding to do so. With the “soft opening” in 2016 and rising water levels in the lakes due to the significant storm activity this winter, there is interest in restoring parks operations at LSA for the 2017 season. Therefore, RMA and CalParks staff have begun evaluating conditions to assess what it would take to reopen LSA along with operating Lake Nacimiento. To develop options, we are evaluating the LSA facilities as two separate venues (North Shore and South Shore) since they offer different experiences that draw different clientele.

DISCUSSION:

LAKE NACIMIENTO

RMA and CalParks staff are reviewing opportunities for services and programs at Nacimiento to take full advantage of high water levels. CalParks is currently working on a recommendation for those operations. Otherwise, operation of Lake Nacimiento will be pretty much business as usual.

The rising water levels at Nacimiento may also result in impacts to LSA South Shore. In past years it has been the practice to divert overflow campers from Nacimiento to LSA South Shore when Nacimiento is full. The high water levels at Nacimiento have already covered the overflow camping that has been utilized throughout the drought years and has eliminated that option at the resort. That means a potential for greater need and interest in camping at LSA South Shore.

LAKE SAN ANTONIO

Under the management agreement with CalParks, the County (RMA) has responsibility for infrastructure (utilities) and vegetation management (trees and weeds). CalParks has responsibility for staffing and maintenance (painting). CalParks is currently developing a recommendation for what they will need in terms of staffing, repairs/maintenance and equipment to operate South Shore similarly to last summer and reopen North Shore through the 2017 summer season. As part of the operations, CalParks has been asked to take over management of reservations for the facilities at both lakes.

Currently LSA water levels have increased from about 5% last season to approximately 40% as of this reporting. Water levels have risen to a point that would allow boat launching access from the North Shore facilities.

Unfortunately, water levels are not the only consideration for if and how to reopen parks operations at LSA. We must consider addressing staffing needs, deferred maintenance projects, equipment repair/replacement, and facility (sewer, plumbing, electrical, etc.) repairs. Some conditions that must be addressed before opening include:

- Road hazards (slides, rocks, trees)
- Failing pumps/wastewater systems
- Damaged utilities (heavy winds)
- Heavily damaged docks/marina
- Significant erosion damage
- Many fallen/hazardous trees
- Large woody debris in the lake, above and below water level

We currently do not have all the information needed to make a definitive recommendation yet. However, even with contract help, we know that we do not have the resources (staffing or funding) to address all of these conditions before opening. Therefore, we are assessing what we can accomplish giving priority to access (critical roads), health (utilities systems), and safety (tree hazards, fire hazard/weeds). For example, we are looking at moving part of the docks (about 40 slips) for convenience, but not having on-water fueling. Staff will provide a verbal update on this at the Committee meeting.

Over the Memorial Day weekend, North Shore will be hosting the Lighting in a Bottle (LIB) event. We intend to use this event to help prepare the facility to be open for the season. Staff is working with the LIB operators to assist with maintenance and repair work. For the Memorial Day weekend, the North Shore facility will be entirely consumed by this event. Staff hopes to be in a position to keep North Shore open throughout the summer, after Memorial Weekend, with CalParks running the operations.

Staff is contemplating another soft opening for South Shore (similar to 2016) for the April 14th weekend to allow the park to be partially open for the Easter weekend. A soft opening means that South Shore would be opened from Friday - Sunday using the same camping areas and restrooms opened as last summer, which is Harris Creek A, B, C and D loops. Restrooms in Harris Creek that will be opened include A loop shower building, Fish Table, Picnic, B loop shower building and D loop. Staff thinks that we may also be able to open Redonda Vista A, B, C and D loops with restrooms in A loop, C loop and D loop.

This soft opening will run through Friday, May 19th. We are evaluating options for a (nearly) full opening of operations for the rest of the season after May 19th. There would be no shower building opened in Redonda Vista before the hard opening. Having a soft opening allows the systems to be tested over a period of five weeks at a low rate so that repairs discovered can be made to the systems during the week.

Lynch and the Beach Day use areas can be opened after the Memorial Day weekend because we do not think that we can fully service these areas by Memorial weekend. Our main target is to have these areas serviced and ready to open by the 4th of July. The areas in Lynch that we recommend opening are A loop, B loop, C loop and D loop along with restrooms in B loop, C loop and the shower building.

We would also open the Beach Day use area and the Beach restroom. However, we will not provide Beach guards. The area would be posted “swim at own risk”, “No Beach Guard on Duty”. CalParks will inform us if they will have fuel and services at the store.

Prepared by: Carl P. Holm, AICP, RMA Director

Attachments:
Lakes Map