

AGENDA

**Kern County Parks and Recreation Commission
County Administrative Center - 1115 Truxtun Avenue, 1st Floor
Board of Supervisors Chambers
Bakersfield, CA 93301**

Regular Meeting

*Wednesday, February 16, 2022
6:30 P.M.*

All agenda items and supporting documentation are available for public review at the Kern County General Services Division, 1115 Truxtun Avenue, 3rd Floor, in Bakersfield, CA 93301 during regular business hours, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, following posting of the agenda. Any supporting documentation that relates to an agenda item that is distributed after the agenda is posted and prior to the meeting will also be available at the same location. **Please be advised that face masks are required when visiting 1115 Truxtun Avenue, regardless of your vaccination status.**

Commissioners: Ryan Abler, District I;
William Chapman, District II;
Kathleen Arnold-Chambers, District III;
Lorena Cervantes, District IV; and
Ucedrah Osby, District V

Disclaimer: This agenda includes the proposed actions and activities with respect to each agenda item as of the date of posting. As such, it does not preclude the Commission from modifying the recommendations of staff or taking different actions than those proposed.

Salute to the Flag

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS, COMMENTS, AND REQUESTS

1. This portion of the agenda is reserved for persons wishing to address the Commission on any matter not on this agenda and over which the Commission has jurisdiction. No response is required from the Commission or staff, and no action can be taken on items not on the agenda; however, Commissioners may respond briefly to statements made or questions posed. Commissioners may ask a question for clarification, make a referral to staff for factual information, or request staff to report back to the Commission at a later meeting. **SPEAKERS ARE LIMITED TO TWO MINUTES. PLEASE STATE YOUR NAME FOR THE RECORD.**
 - i. Presentation by Carolyn Belli on Resource Management in the Panorama Park Preserve; **HEAR PRESENTATION**
 - ii. Public Comments and Requests.

CONSENT AGENDA

2. All items on the consent agenda are considered to be routine and non-controversial by staff. Consent items will be considered first and may be approved by one motion if no member of the Commission or public wishes to comment or ask questions. If discussion is desired, the item will be removed from the consent agenda and will be considered in the listed sequence.

- i. Approval of Minutes: Regular meeting on January 19, 2022; **APPROVE**
- ii. Miscellaneous Correspondence; **RECEIVE AND FILE**

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

- 3. General Services – This portion of the meeting is reserved for General Services staff to provide a report regarding new and ongoing projects, programs, and plans relating to Kern County Parks, including the items listed below; **INFORMATIONAL**
 - i. Kern River Parkway projects
 - ii. California Ave. property
 - iii. Grant updates
 - v. Off-highway Vehicle (OHV) Park
 - vi. Miscellaneous small projects
- 4. Park Ranger – Status Update; **INFORMATIONAL**
- 5. Park Showcase – Lamont Park – District 4; **INFORMATIONAL**

NEW, UNFINISHED, AND OTHER BUSINESS

- 6. Staff to provide a list of park restroom closures; **INFORMATIONAL**
- 7. Staff to provide update regarding Casa Loma lighting project; **INFORMATIONAL**
- 8. Referral by Commissioner Osby related to community input regarding parks projects; **REVIEW AND DISCUSS OPTIONS FOR COMMUNITY INPUT REGARDING PARKS PROJECTS**
- 9. Referral by Commissioner Abler related to requests for naming of trails; **REVIEW AND DISCUSS THE REQUEST TO NAME TRAILS**
- 10. Upcoming Commission meeting locations as per code §2.50.060(D); **DISCUSS POTENTIAL MEETING LOCATIONS IN EACH SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT AND SET SCHEDULE**

COMMISSION MEMBER PRESENTATIONS OR ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 11. On their own initiative, Commission members may make a brief announcement or a brief report on their own activities. Commissioners may request that an item be agendaized at a future meeting, make a referral to staff for factual information, or request that staff report back to the Commission at a later meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

- 12. Adjourn to next regular meeting, scheduled for March 16, 2022, at 6:30 p.m., to be conducted at the County Administrative Center - 1115 Truxtun Avenue, 1st Floor, Board of Supervisors Chambers, Bakersfield, CA 93301, unless otherwise indicated, changed, and/or cancelled by the Commission.

**Americans with Disabilities Act
(Government Code Section 54953.2)**

The Kern County Administrative Center is accessible to persons with disabilities. Disabled individuals who need assistance to attend or participate in a meeting of the Kern County Parks and Recreation Commission may request assistance at the Kern County Parks and Recreation Division, 1115 Truxtun Avenue, 3rd Floor, Bakersfield, or by calling (661) 868-7000. Every effort will be made to reasonably accommodate individuals with disabilities by making meeting material available in alternate formats. Requests should be made five (5) working days in advance whenever possible.

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<https://www.kerncounty.com/gsd/parks/>



Kern County
Parks and Recreation Commission

Public Presentations



Kern County
Parks and Recreation Commission

Consent Agenda

MINUTES

**Kern County Parks and Recreation Commission
1115 Truxtun Avenue, 1st Floor
Bakersfield, CA 93301
Board of Supervisors Chambers**

Regular Meeting

*Wednesday, January 19, 2022
6:30 P.M.*

A meeting of the Kern County Parks and Recreation Commission was held on Wednesday, January 19, 2022. Chairman Arnold-Chambers presided and called the meeting to order at 6:40 PM. Flag Salute: Commissioner Abler.

- Present:** Commissioner(s): Ryan Abler, District I; William Chapman, District II; Kathleen Arnold-Chambers, District III; and Ucedrah Osby, District V
- Absent:** Lorena Cervantes, District IV
- Staff:** Brian Van Wyk, Deputy County Counsel; Geoffrey Hill, Chief General Services Officer; Shane Denton, Supervising Park Ranger – General Services; and Matt Howard, General Services Manager – General Services
- Others:** There were five (5) others present

NOTE: Ab, Ch, Ar, Ce, and Os are abbreviations for Commissioners Abler, Chapman, Arnold-Chambers, Cervantes, and Osby. As an example, Ar-Ch denotes Commissioner Arnold-Chambers made a motion and Commissioner Chapman seconded the motion.

COMMISSION MEMBER ORGANIZATION

1. AR-CH TO APPOINT KATHLEEN ARNOLD-CHAMBERS AS THE CHAIRMAN AND RYAN ABLER AT THE CO-CHAIRMAN OF THE KERN COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION FOR THE 2022 CALENDAR YEAR. 4 AYES – 0 OPPOSED. MOTION CARRIED.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

2. This portion of the meeting is reserved for persons wishing to address the Commission on any matter not on this agenda and over which the Commission has jurisdiction. No response is required from the Commission or staff, and no action can be taken on items not on the agenda; however, Commissioners may respond briefly to statements made or questions posed. Commissioners may ask a question for clarification, make a referral to staff for factual information, or request staff to report back to the Commission at a later meeting.

EDDY LAINE WAS PRESENT BEFORE THE COMMISSION TO PROVIDE PHOTOS AND COMMENTS REGARDING GRAFFITI IN A PARK, RESTROOM CLOSURES, AND THE

HART PARK WORKING GROUPS PREVIOUS SUGGESTIONS FOR INCLUSION IN THE HART MEMORIAL PARK MASTER PLAN.

DENNIS FOX WAS PRESENT BEFORE THE COMMISSION TO SHARE TO PROVIDE COMMENTS REGARDING THE CHANGES BEING MADE AT HART MEMORIAL PARK.

CONSENT AGENDA

3. All items on the consent agenda are considered to be routine and non-controversial by staff. Consent items will be considered first and may be approved by one motion if no member of the Commission or public wishes to comment or ask questions. If discussion is desired, the item will be removed from the consent agenda and will be considered in the listed sequence.

I. Approval of Minutes: Regular meeting on November 17, 2021. CH-AB TO APPROVE THE NOVEMBER 17, 2021, MEETING MINUTES AS WRITTEN. 4 AYES – 0 OPPOSED

II. Miscellaneous Correspondence. NONE

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

4. General Services – Status Updates

I. Hart Memorial Park – GEOFFREY HILL, CHIEF GENERAL SERVICES OFFICER WAS PRESENT BEFORE THE COMMISSION TO REPORT ON THE STATUS OF THE HART MEMORIAL PARK ADOBE PROJECT, THE TRAILHEAD AND MONUMENT SIGN PROJECT AND A FENCING PROJECT THAT IS BEING COMPLETED ON THE EAST END OF THE PARK. ADDITIONALLY, GEOFFREY HILL ASKED KATHERINE WINTERS OF THE WHITE WOLF WELLNESS FOUNDATION TO COME FORWARD AND PROVIDE AN UPDATE REGARDING THE IMPROVEMENTS AT CAMP OKIHI THEY HAVE COMPLETED AND/OR ARE IN THE PROCESS OF COMPLETING.

II. California Ave. Property – GEOFFREY HILL, CHIEF GENERAL SERVICES OFFICER WAS PRESENT BEFORE THE COMMISSION TO REPORT ON THE STATUS OF THE CALIFORNIA AVE. PROPERTY. GEOFFREY HILL ADVISED THAT ALL REQUIRED ENTITIES HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED OF STATUS VIA STANDARD NOTICE FORM AND TWO PARTIES EXPRESS INTERESTED IN THE PROPERTY. THE DEPARTMENT WILL BE GOING BEFORE THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS TO SET AN AUCTION DATE IF THE PARTIES DO NOT REACH AN AGREEMENT WITHIN THE 90-DAY PERIOD.

III. Proposition 68 – Per Capita – THAT THE PER CAPITA GRANT APPLICATION HAS BEEN SUBMITTED TO THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA ALONG WITH THE APPROVED BOARD OF SUPERVISOR RESOLUTIONS. MATT HOWARD FURTHER REPORTED THAT STAFF IS WORKING WITH THE PROJECT OFFICER ON A FEW CLARIFYING QUESTIONS.

IV. Proposition 68 – Regional Parks Program – MATT HOWARD, GENERAL SERVICES MANAGER INFORMED THE COMMISSION THAT STAFF IS CURRENTLY WORKING WITH THE COUNTY'S GRANT CONSULTING FIRM REGARDING THE REGIONAL PARKS PROGRAM. THE REGIONAL PARKS BEING CONSIDERED FOR APPLICATIONS INCLUDE FRAZIER MOUNTAIN PARK AND BUENA VISTA AQUATIC RECREATIONAL AREA.

V. Off-highway Vehicle (OHV) Park – MATT HOWARD, GENERAL SERVICES MANAGER

PROVIDED AN UPDATE REGARDING THE STATUS OF THE OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE (OHV) GRANT FOR A FUTURE OHV PARK IN KERN COUNTY.

VI. Miscellaneous small projects – NONE REPORTED.

5. Park Ranger – Status Update – SHANE DENTON, SUPERVISING PARK RANGER, PROVIDED THE COMMISSION WITH A VERBAL UPDATE REGARDING THE RANGER STATISTICS.
6. Park Showcase – North Edwards Park – District 2 - STAFF PROVIDED THE COMMISSION WITH A SHOWCASE OF NORTH EDWARDS PARK LOCATED IN DISTRICT 1 OF NORTH EDWARDS, CA. NORTH EDWARDS PARK IS A COMMUNITY PARK THAT OFFERS A SOFTBALL FIELD, A LARGE GROUP PICNIC AREA, PICNIC TABLES, BBQS, A TOT-LOT, SWINGS, SPRING RIDERS, RESTROOMS, AND MATURE LANDSCAPE.

NEW, UNFINISHED, AND OTHER BUSINESS

7. Request for information regarding what a Master Plan is and guidelines on how to develop, change, and update a Plan – GEOFFREY HILL, CHIEF GENERAL SERVICES OFFICER WAS PRESENT BEFORE THE COMMISSION TO PROVIDE INFORMATION AS IT RELATES TO THE PLANNING PROCESS, UPDATES TO A PLAN, AND THE LIFESPAN OF A PLAN.
8. How can the Commission help the public when ideas regarding parks are brought forward – BRIAN VAN WYK WAS PRESENT BEFORE THE COMMISSION TO PROVIDE INPUT ON HOW THE COMMISSION CAN HELP THE PUBLIC WITH IDEAS REGARDING PARKS ARE BROUGHT FORWARD. BRIAN VAN WYK ADVISED THE COMMISSION THAT THE PUBLIC CAN PARTICIPATE IN COMMISSION MEETINGS; THE COMMISSION COULD PARTICIPATE IN MORE COMMUNITY EVENTS AND GET INVOLVED WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY; THE COMMISSION SHOULD HOLD THEIR MEETINGS IN DIFFERENT DISTRICTS AS PER THE ORDINANCE; PARTICIPATE IN PARK TOURS; AND HOLD SPECIAL MEETINGS WHEN NEEDED.

COMMISSION MEMBER PRESENTATIONS OR ANNOUNCEMENTS

9. On their own initiative, Commission members may make a brief announcement or a brief report on their own activities. Commissioners may request that an item be agendaized at a future meeting, make a referral to staff for factual information, or request that staff report back to the Commission at a later meeting. COMMISSIONER OSBY REQUESTED THAT A LIST OF THE RESTROOM CLOSURES BE PROVIDED AND THE NEXT MEETING; AN UPDATE REGARDING THE CASA LOMA LIGHTING PROJECT BE PROVIDED AT THE NEXT MEETING; AND THE TOPIC OF HOW THE COMMUNITY CAN SHARE THEIR INPUTS REGARDING PARKS PROJECT BE ON THE NEXT MEETING AGENDA. COMMISSIONER OSBY ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT SHE IS SEEKING ARTIST(S) FOR A COVID ART PROJECT.

COMMISSIONERS CHAPMAN EXTENDED HIS GRATITUDE TO COMMISSIONER OSBY FOR SERVICING AT THE CHAIRMAN IN 2021.

ADJOURNMENT

10. Adjourn at 8:16 p.m. to next regular meeting, scheduled for February 16, 2022, at 6:30 p.m., at the County Administrative Center – 1115 Truxtun Ave., Bakersfield, 1st Floor – Board of Supervisors Chambers.

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February 1, 2022

Kern County Board of Supervisors
1115 Truxtun Avenue
Bakersfield, CA. 93301

Dear Members of the Board:

This letter and recommendations are submitted regarding situations and conditions near Kern County's Kern River. Specifically this with regard three areas of the Kern River Parkway: (1) the Kern River Riparian Preserve Park, (2) the Kern River Golf Course and (3) the Multi-Use Trail in Hart Park--including the riparian area between the fence and Kern River and general Hart Park issues.

THE KERN RIVER RIPARIAN PRESERVE PARK

BACKGROUND: The Sierra Club, Kern-Kaweah Chapter, had advocated for the creation of the Kern River Riparian Preserve for several years before it was formally designated in 2020.

FINDINGS (during the last few months--many with staff from Third District Supervisor Mike Maggard's staff--all in violation of Kern County Ordinance Code Section 13.16.020 which created the Riparian Preserve):

1. The Riparian Preserve has been degraded by illegally dumped refuse.
2. There is evidence of numerous illegal fires (with one smoldering fire put out by staff from Supervisor Mike Maggard's office and others).
3. The Riparian Preserve has been degraded by graffiti.
4. The Riparian Preserve has been degraded by off road vehicles (entering from the Kern River Campground area as well as from near Hart Park).
5. Specific signage as required by Ordinance has not been posted.

The first four findings parallel our previous letter of September 7, 2021 that "the Riparian Preserve has been degraded by trash, fire pits, graffiti, and destructive use by off road

vehicles. Our Riparian Preserve is not being preserved, but misused and overused by those who do not care or know about its special nature and uniqueness along the southern San Joaquin Valley portion of the Kern River.”

With regard to the signage issue, to date Kern County has posted no signage consistent with Kern County Ordinance Code Section 13.16.020, which reads:

“The County shall post educational and instructional signs that shall be conspicuously visible along the boundaries of the Kern River Riparian Preserve Park as well as at access points, and that shall contain wording substantially in the manner and form as follows:

NOTICE: KERN RIVER RIPARIAN PRESERVE PARK. UNAUTHORIZED VEHICLES, THE USE OF ANY FIREARMS, OPEN FIRES OF ANY KIND, OVERNIGHT CAMPING, SMOKING, LITTERING, MOLESTING AND DAMAGING FLORA AND FAUNA ARE ALL STRICTLY PROHIBITED. Kern County Ordinance Code Section 13.16.020”

RECOMMENDATIONS (given these on-going problems, restating and supplementing recommendations from the September 7, 2021 letter):

1. For the protection of this area, regular ranger enforcement on the walking trails is essential—especially given illegal fires, littering, the destruction of flora and fauna and graffiti in the this area. Had there been an active ranger presence in the Riparian Preserve some of the fires might have been prevented. According to staff only one citation in the general area including Lake Ming was issued in 2021.

We would note that when the County’s FY 2021-2022 Budget was adopted on August 31, 2021 six Ranger and Security positions were vacant (of a total of 14 positions). We further recommend that one of the 14 positions be assigned to the Kern River Parkway on a permanent basis—with more ranger assistance during busy weekend and holiday periods. This could be done through the re-assignment of rangers currently used in the Kern County Administrative Building and their replacement (partial or fully) by staff from other Kern County Departments or through contracting (partial or fully) with a private security firm.

2. A related recommendation stems from these six vacancies of 14 positions. These six vacancies represent approximately 43% of the total number of authorized positions. This vacancy rate seems exceptionally high. We would recommend that immediate steps be taken to address this high vacancy rate by: (a) examining the pay scale, (b) hiring part-time, temporary, retired employees and/or employees from another Kern County Department—using the same or other similar classifications, and/or (c) on a temporary basis hiring a private security firm to assist in duties which cannot be filled because of this high number and percentage of positions unfilled.

3. Signage consistent with Kern County Ordinance Code Section 13.16.020 needs to be posted so the public can act with appreciation and preservation.

4. The County develop a Habitat Management, Protection and Restoration Plan. This could be done by working with CSUB Department of Environmental Studies or contracting with a firm with expertise to develop such a plan. One firm that has done considerable work in Kern County is River Partners--that has contracted for similar work by Panorama Vista Preserve for years. Such a plan would include: (a) earmarking selected areas for special protection such as fencing during restoration, and (b) the availability and use of water (drip irrigation) for new plantings of native species.

An attachment labeled "Kern River Preserve Detailed Concerns" provides additional information related to this recommendation.

5. A new recommendation relates to the dirt parking lot adjacent to the southeast border of Hart Park nearest the soccer fields and used as one access to the Riparian Preserve (note: this parking lot has been a source of problems such as illegal drug distribution and use).

It is unclear whether there was an approved environmental assessment of this specific parking lot. This parking lot appears to be in the secondary flood plane. As such it would need to be identified as a parking area in a secondary flood plane (by page number and map) in any California Environmental Act (CEQA) review/assessment in the 2003 Kern River Specific Trials Plan. It is not clear that this specific parking lot was identified as such. Staff comments that this is a "staging area" for equestrian use as justification for a public parking lot is questionable.

We recommend that County provide evidence of the appropriate CEQA review for this specific parking lot including an approved negative declaration regarding its potential impact on the environment.

THE KERN RIVER GOLF COURSE

BACKGROUND: For several years there have been unsubstantiated rumors that the Golf Course (a private for-profit business) has been watering its greens using Kern River water being pumped by pumps which are also used to pump water to Lake Ming. This is Kern River water the County of Kern is purchasing from the City.

FINDINGS: Through a series of California Public Records Act requests it has been determined that:

1. That "the County has no records responsive" to questions about water usage nor any payments for water used by the golf course.

2. The County is not metering water used by the Kern River Golf Course (“The County does not maintain a record detailing the amount of water pumped by the Golf Course,”) was the exact wording.

3. The County in its 2008 contract with the Kern River Golf Course specified that “the diversion of water from any river shall include the installation and maintenance of a water meter or other similar measuring device” and that the Kern River Golf Course “shall be responsible for the installation, maintenance and replacement of the water meter.” Also in that agreement was reference to the Kern River Golf Course providing reports of water use, “at least once monthly, with a written record of the meter readings. County, and County's agents, may inspect and test, at any reasonable time, all water meters without notice to Lessee.”

4. The County in its 2017 Amendment to the 2008 Agreement eliminated that language related to a water meter. In its place was language that if “the cost of acquiring irrigation water . . . exceeds \$100,000 per agreement year. Lessee may terminate Agreement.” To be noted: the 2017 Amendment was signed by Kern County General Services after the elimination of the Kern County Parks and Recreation Department as a separate department.

5. The County maintained that it “does not purchase water from the City of Bakersfield for Kern River Golf Course use.” Yet, later the County acknowledged that: (a) in 1968 the County approved a Public Work Department for new 6 inch piping running from the location of the current pumps to the Kern River Golf Course, and (b) in March-August of 2020 new pumps were installed at the Kern River Golf Course Irrigation Pump Station.

6. With regard to a question about Kern River Golf Course keys to the pumping station, the response was that the “County does not maintain any records responsive to the questions you have asked.”

7. In response to a question about conservation practices required of the Kern River Golf Course during the drought conditions of the last year again the response was the “County does not maintain any records responsive to the questions you have asked.”

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The County of Kern re-instate language eliminated in the 2017 Agreement with the Kern River Golf Course requiring metering of water pumped from the same pumps which pump water into Lake Ming. The purpose: to meter water and require the Kern River Golf to pay for water which the Golf Course is now obtaining/using without payment.

Note: with new pumping equipment for the Kern River Golf Course installed in 2020 such metering may be easily done voluntarily prior to a formal contractual amendment. Without such metering there is no way to determine: (a) the amount of water the Kern River Golf Course is using on its greens, or (b) the potential payment to the County of Kern for this water.

2. For security reasons, the County require the Kern River Golf Course to provide a list of the names of employees authorized to have keys to the gates to the pumping station used by the Kern River Golf Course to turn water on and off (for the purpose of watering the greens).

3. The County require that the Kern River Golf Course implement December 14, 2021 City of Bakersfield-issued water restrictions mandates as: (a) water for the greens of the Kern River Golf Course is being provided by the City of Bakersfield through its contract with the County of Kern and (b) in consideration of the Kern County Water Agency December 15, 2021 declared drought emergency.

Those City of Bakersfield water restriction mandates include: (a) limiting outdoor landscape water usage to three days per week after 6:00 p.m. and before 9:00 a.m. and (b) odd number addresses watering on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays and even number addresses watering on Wednesdays, Friday and Sundays and no outdoor watering permitted on Mondays.

THE MULTI-USE TRAIL IN HART PARK—INCLUDING THE RIPARIAN AREA BETWEEN THE FENCE AND THE KERN RIVER AND GENERAL HART PARK ISSUES

BACKGROUND: The Kern River Specific Trails Plan (2003) includes a portion of the Multi-Use Trail in Hart Park. This Multi-Use Trail was developed along the Kern River.

FINDINGS:

1. Hazardous conditions on the Multi-Use Trail including: (a) severe erosion in certain areas near the Peacock/Adobe making equestrian and human use dangerous, and (b) large holes in the middle of the Trail in two areas due to broken watering/sprinkler system issues. Note: such conditions are a clear violation of the Multi-Use Trails Plan. Page 32 of the Plan states that trail conditions need to “ensure public safety and minimize the County’s liability.” Hazardous conditions were first reported to Kern County General Services, the Kern County Parks and Recreation Commission and this Board in August of 2019 by the Hart Park Working Group. Since that time conditions have only worsened.

2. Graffiti on rocks and trees. Graffiti is found: (a) on rocks near the Kern River, (b) on trees near the Kern River, (c) in one case on a tree on an island in the Kern River, (d) in trees in Hart Park and (e) on the gating of the canal which feeds Hart Lake.

3. In the riparian area evidence of numerous illegal fires for barbequing (fire pits and/or used briquettes and/or burnt wood). Also--trash in some areas.

4. Overcrowding during summer weekends and holidays (in many areas of Hart Park as well as the riparian area between the fencing and the Kern River).

5. In Hart Park sprinklers observed (and reported) during the heat of the day (one reading was 102 degrees in August of 2021).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The Multi-Use Trail be repaired for safe use by the public and for equestrian use.
2. Graffiti on rocks and trees be removed.
3. Regular ranger foot patrols along the Multi-Use Trail and the riparian area to deal with illegal graffiti, fires and trash issues.
4. Kern County develop a specific, detailed Hart Park Management Plan to include the Multi-Use Trail and riparian area between the wooden fencing and the Kern River as well. Such a plan would include addressing issues just noted (for the regular monitoring and removal of graffiti, illegal fires and trash in the riparian area) of as well as other Hart Park issues such as a maintenance schedule for restroom cleaning.
5. Kern County develop a water conservation plan for Hart Park be developed as soon as possible consistent with: (a) Governor Newsom's May 11, 2021 extension of the drought emergency (at the request of many local elected officials) to include Kern County, (b) the December 14, 2021 City of Bakersfield issued water restrictions mandates since water for Hart Park is being purchased from the City of Bakersfield, and (c) The Kern County Water Agency declared drought emergency.

We hope for a favorable response regarding these issues and recommendations.

Sincerely,



Gordon Nipp Vice-Chair, Sierra Club,
Kern-Kaweah Chapter



Eddy Laine, Member, Executive
Committee, Sierra Club, Kern-
Kaweah Chapter

cc: Kern County Parks and Recreation Commission

Attachment: Kern River Riparian Preserve Detailed Concerns

KERN RIVER RIPARIAN PRESERVE DETAILED CONCERNS

One example of an invasive tree found in the Riparian Preserve is the Tree of Heaven. In some areas Trees of Heaven (Botanical Name: *Ailanthus altissima*) have crowded out native trees and vegetation. The appropriate removal process is cutting the trees as close to the ground as possible, brushing off sawdust and applying a systemic herbicide.

Should these Trees of Heaven be appropriately removed, new trees would need to be planted--with appropriate water and fencing for protection. Such a Habitat Management, Protection and Restoration Plan would specify appropriate methods.

The recommendation for a Habitat Management, Protection, and Restoration Plan is particularly timely given a brief discussion at the January 19, 2022, Kern County Parks and Recreation Commission regarding Kern County General Services possibly submitting a grant for work in the Preserve by the CCC (the California Conservation Corps)—possibly related to trails or the removal of invasive species.

Such a possibility (CCC work) ought not be considered until the issues previously noted have been fully addressed.

In addition, before any new grant proposal is developed, there needs to be consultation and collaboration with community stakeholders such as the Third District Parks and Recreation Commissioner, the Kern River Parkway Foundation and Kern Audubon Society and the Sierra Club, Kern-Kaweah Chapter.

One basic reason: to protect the flora and fauna in the Riparian Preserve (consistent with the noted Ordinance establishing the Riparian Preserve).

This was not done during a recent trail “improvement” near the dirt parking lot near the southeast end of Hart Park. Kern County General Services staff oversaw the bulldozing of rocks with graffiti and the cutting and removing of trees with graffiti “for easier public access.” This example should not be duplicated

It should also be noted that at one point General Services proposed a 12-foot trail through the Riparian Preserve near Pyles Boys Camp Parking lot. Again, such a proposal runs counter to the original intent of the Riparian Preserve as well as other Kern County Ordinances 19.73.110, page 391, which requires that “native . . . vegetation remain undisturbed”, and Southern San Joaquin Valley Air Resource Board Statue Rule 8011 Section 311, which defines disturbing a surface area as follows, “an area in which naturally occurring soils, or soils or other materials placed thereon, have been physically moved, uncovered, destabilized, or otherwise modified . . .”

Any plan/proposal which would further destroy (as occurred during the recent bulldozing of rocks and cutting and removing of trees) in any portion of the Riparian Preserve “for easier public access” needs to be stopped.

February 1, 2022



Kern County
Parks and Recreation Commission

Department Staff
Report(s)



Kern County
Parks and Recreation Commission

New/Unfinished/
Other Business



Kern County

Parks and Recreation Commission

Commission Comments



Kern County
Parks and Recreation Commission

Adjournment