

**NOTICE OF PREPARATION
OF AN
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
FOR THE
BASS LAKE REGIONAL PARK PROJECT**

Prepared for:

**El Dorado County
Department of General Services
Division of Airports, Parks, and Grounds**

Prepared by:



ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP & PLANNING
INCORPORATED

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1 INTRODUCTION

El Dorado County proposes to develop a public park near Bass Lake in El Dorado County, California. The Bass Lake Regional Park would include public use facilities available for both organized events and general recreation, and would be constructed, maintained, and operated by the El Dorado County Department of General Services, Division of Airports, Parks, and Grounds (County Parks).

As required by California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, the County is providing this Notice of Preparation (NOP) to responsible agencies, other key agencies, private organizations, and individuals. The County is the Lead Agency for project CEQA compliance and will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to evaluate the potential impacts of the project.

2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 Location (See Figure 1)

The proposed park site is located on County-owned property adjacent to Bass Lake Road, approximately 1.5 miles due north of Highway 50, in El Dorado County. The park would be located on a 41-acre parcel of land located between Bass Lake Road and Bass Lake. Access to the park would be from Bass Lake Road, approximately 2.5 miles north of Highway 50 and 1.5 miles south of Green Valley Road as shown on Figure 1.

Bass Lake and associated dikes and facilities is owned, operated, and maintained by the El Dorado Irrigation District (EID). Approximately 20 acres of land owned by EID on the northern side of Bass Lake may be incorporated into the park through an easement arrangement between the County and EID for passive and semi-passive public uses on portions of EID property. The park site would not include Bass Lake or encroach upon areas contained within the dikes and other facilities associated with the lake.

In addition to EID property, the park site is central to a number of existing and planned residential developments, and is located centrally between the communities of El Dorado Hills and Cameron Park.

2.2 Project Objectives

The park is envisioned as a regional facility that would serve County residents and visitors to western El Dorado County. Primarily as a result of the role that the park would provide in serving the needs of the region, the proposed park is considered a *regional park*. According to the County General Plan Parks and Recreation Element, Policy 9.1.1.4, “Regional parks and recreation facilities shall incorporate natural resources such as lakes and creeks and serve a region involving more than one community. Regional parks generally range in size from 30 to 10,000 acres with the preferred size being several hundred acres. Facilities may include multi-purpose fields, ball fields, group picnic areas, playgrounds, swimming facilities, amphitheaters, tennis courts, multi-purpose hard-courts, shooting sports facilities, concessionaire facilities, trails, nature interpretive centers, campgrounds, natural or historic points of interest, and community multi-purpose centers.”

Specific objectives of the project include the following

- 1. Provide public use recreational facilities in western El Dorado County to meet increased demands associated with residential development and increases in population in the region.**
- 2. Provide opportunities for organized soccer and softball/baseball league play for both youth and adults, as well as diverse recreational and other outdoor activity opportunities for independent use, in a centrally located, multi-use park facility.**
- 3. Provide public-use facilities for non-athletic events, including community meetings, outdoor theater and other performing arts, picnicking/day use, and child recreation.**
- 4. Develop such facilities in a manner that preserves open space, is consistent with land use planning, has readily available opportunities for necessary utility interconnections (water, sewer/wastewater, and electricity), and has convenient access via primary transportation corridors while avoiding increased traffic volumes on residential streets.**

2.3 Proposed Project Facilities (See Figure 2)

Park facilities would provide opportunities such as organized athletic and community events, general recreation, and picnicking. Figure 2 shows the proposed park configuration upon completion of all proposed facilities. Proposed park facilities at full build-out would include:

Turf Areas and Soccer Fields – Turf areas would be available for both organized play and public use. Turf areas would include striping to delineate two full-size soccer fields, each 330 feet by 210 feet (as shown on Figure 2), or two youth-size soccer fields in place of one of the full-size fields. Permanent or portable goals, as well as goal netting and corner flagging, would be installed or stored on site and made available for league play.

Ball Fields – Two ball fields will be configured to accommodate both softball and baseball play for youth and adults. Field amenities would include infield and outfield turf, compact dirt base lanes, pitching mounds, inset home plates, backstops and perimeter fencing, bullpen/team seating, and spectator seating.

Basketball Courts – Two adjacent, asphaltic concrete, hard-surface basketball courts would include painting/striping for basketball play, net posts, basketball rims and backboards, and related equipment.

Disc Golf Course – A nine-“hole” disc golf course would be delineated and equipment would be installed, including tee pads, pole/baskets, rest benches, and hole direction/par signage.

Child Play Areas – Two child play areas (playgrounds) that meet current Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards, each with an adjacent toddler play area, would include equipment such as swings, climbing equipment, and slides. Playgrounds would be delineated and would include soft ground surfacing for child safety and benches.

Trail System – A trail system would be developed throughout the park which would include paved pathways to provide pedestrian routes to connect parking areas, restrooms, recreation areas, and other park facilities. The park would also include earthen or decomposed granite pathways through undeveloped areas of the site for pedestrian use (due to the confined nature of the trail system, equestrian use of pathways would be prohibited). Development of

a loop trail around the perimeter of Bass Lake would require a public use easement from EID for access to the perimeter dike system and dam crossing

***Nature Interpretive Center* – An interpretive center would be developed with pathways and signage to provide information on natural resources (plant and animal communities, geology, etc.) and historical topics. The nature center would include an outdoor “classroom” with seating to accommodate approximately 60 individuals.**

***Community Center* – An approximately 6,000 square-foot community center with a meeting hall and dining facilities would be constructed and made available for indoor activities, such as public meetings and performances. Use of the Community Center would be coordinated through County Parks.**

***Concession Building* – A concession building would be constructed and made available for use by community groups associated with organized athletic or other events at the park. Use of the Concession Building would be coordinated through County Parks.**

***Picnic Areas* – Picnic areas consisting of one or more picnic tables and benches would be situated at various locations within the park site. Concrete pads, grills, and shade structures may be installed at some picnic area locations. In addition, two group picnic areas, including the previously mentioned amenities and solid roof shelters, would be conveniently located near major use facilities.**

***Restrooms* – A minimum of three separate restroom facilities would be installed within the park.**

***Dog Park* – An approximately 1-acre dog park would be developed for confined, off-leash exercise, play, and interaction for dogs and their owners. The dog park would consist of turf and decomposed granite areas and would include perimeter fencing with a double-gated entry, a drinking fountain and faucet for filling dog bowls, dispersed tree plantings, benches and/or picnic tables, rules and conduct signage, trash receptacles, and disposable bags for owners to use for pet waste clean-up and disposal.**

***Parking Areas* – Automobile parking facilities would be sized to accommodate up to 290 vehicles. Parking areas would be paved and striped, and would include landscaped islands interspersed within the paved parking areas. Disabled parking spaces would be included in locations and quantities as required. Bike racks would also be installed at various locations within the park. Space to accommodate two school buses would also be available near the Nature Interpretive Center.**

***Lighting* – Safety lighting would be installed in parking areas and throughout the park as necessary to provide adequate lighting for evening uses and security. Lighting of one baseball field and one soccer field is anticipated. All lighting would be directional and shielded to reduce off-site light and glare to the extent practicable.**

***Maintenance Area* – A maintenance building with a workshop and equipment storage area would be constructed and situated apart from public use areas to the extent practicable. The maintenance building and outdoor equipment storage areas would be fenced, and public access would be prohibited.**

***Landscaping/Facility Design* – Landscaping at the park would combine tree and shrubbery plantings, groundcover, and curved pathways and curbs in a manner that would provide an**

aesthetic and consistent appearance to developed areas of the park. All planted areas, including turf areas, would be irrigated with in-ground systems that would be installed during construction. All park signage, lighting, fencing and building design would also be designed to be consistent in appearance. Fencing would be installed as determined necessary to restrict access to certain areas for public safety and security purposes.

Ancillary Facilities – In addition to the above facilities, the park would include directional signage in parking areas and along pathways. Electrical supply outlets would be located at certain facilities to provide electrical sources for maintenance equipment and event use. Drinking water fountains would be installed in proximity to public use areas, and waste receptacles would be installed at various locations throughout the park.

2.4 Construction Schedule

Construction of the park and installation of the facilities describe above would begin in fall 2003. Due to funding constraints and Bass Lake Road improvements that would be necessary with certain levels of park usage, development of the park would occur in two or more phases. Facilities anticipated for installation during Phase 1 and subsequent phases are listed in Table 1. The EIR will consider the potential impacts of Phase I and subsequent park development phases, including the completed project.

2.5 Operation

County Parks would be responsible for operation and maintenance of the Bass Lake Regional Park. Operation would include coordination with sports leagues and community groups for scheduling events and facilities use. Equipment set-up for organized sport events and group activities would be the responsibility of the sponsoring organization through coordination with County Parks. County Parks will provide maintenance staff to ensure that adequate access to equipment stored on site (such as soccer goals and detachable bases) is available.

Park Hours

The park will be open to the public from 6:00 a.m. to one half-hour after sunset, with exceptions for extending evening play through advance arrangement with County Parks. Anticipated peak-use times for the park are 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on weekends and summer holidays, and from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on weekdays. Typical peak use associated with organized sporting events would occur between March and October, with late fall and winter use levels expected to be relatively minimal.

Table 1 Facility Installation Timing	
Phase 1	Subsequent Phases
Entry road	Open turf areas
One ball field	One ball field
One soccer field	One soccer field
One playground and toddler area	One playground and toddler area
One restroom facility	Two restroom facilities
Sufficient parking for use of Phase 1 facilities (approximately 60 to 90 spaces)	Remainder of parking facilities
Picnic tables, walkways, lighting, and other amenities necessary to support use of Phase 1 facilities	Additional picnic tables, walkways, lighting, and other amenities necessary to support use of Phase 2 facilities
Fencing and landscaping required to support use of Phase 1 facilities	Additional fencing and landscaping required to support use of Phase 2 facilities.
Maintenance area	Basketball courts
	Disc golf course
	Dog park
	Group picnic facilities
	Nature Interpretive Center
	Community meeting hall
	Concession building

Concession

Concession operation would be provided by Community Services Districts or sport league groups. Access to the concession building and use of permanent equipment would be coordinated through County Parks.

Maintenance

County Parks staff would maintain the park grounds and equipment, clean and stock restrooms, empty waste receptacles, and provide general upkeep of park facilities. General hours of grounds-keeping activities requiring mechanized equipment (e.g., lawn mowers, lawn edge trimmers, leaf blowers, etc.) would occur on weekdays between 7:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

3 ALTERNATIVES

The Proposed Project, as described above, was developed through an iterative community involvement process which involved public site tours and park planning workshops. Subsequent to these workshops, County Parks staff reviewed the park configurations developed through the community involvement process and developed a modified park configuration that accommodates certain limitations associated with land ownership and current funding constraints that were not fully considered during the initial community involvement process. This modified configuration was presented to the local community in a public workshop on April 17, 2003. The Proposed Project presented herein retains many of the features developed throughout the community involvement process and contains modifications to address comments provided at the April 17, 2003, workshop.

As required by CEQA, the EIR will consider alternatives to the Proposed Project, including a “no project” alternative. Various alternatives will be considered, which will include alternative park locations as well as alternative configurations of the park at the same location as the proposed Bass Lake Regional Park site.

The County invites public comments on this NOP that include suggestions concerning potential park development alternatives. All alternatives identified will be evaluated in an Alternatives Screening Analyses that will consider 1) the extent to which each alternative meets the project objectives, and 2) the potential for environmental impacts of each alternative to be lessened in comparison with those identified for the Proposed Project.

4 POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Potential impacts resulting from the Proposed Project could include and may not be limited to the following

Biological Resources – Construction of park facilities would require vegetation clearing and ground disturbance that would result in potential impacts to wildlife and special-status plant and animal species. Tree removal required for project construction would have the potential to affect nesting raptors and species protected by the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act. In addition, the project could result in the disturbance and/or fill of jurisdictional wetlands. Potential impacts to such resources will be evaluated and identified in the environmental document. Mitigation measures to avoid or reduce potential impacts, as well as any permits that may be required, will also be identified.

Traffic and Transportation – Construction activities would result in temporary construction-related vehicle trips on Bass Lake Road, and ingress and egress of construction vehicles and construction adjacent to the roadway could create temporary disruptions in traffic flow on Bass Lake Road. Following the park’s opening, user visitation would result in increased traffic on Bass Lake Road as well as other roadways within the project area. Potential conflicts between vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrians will be analyzed and reported. Existing traffic volumes on project-area roadways and levels-of-service at project area intersections will be determined, and potential impacts associated with construction and park use traffic will be projected and presented in the EIR.

Noise - Construction activities would result in short-term increases in noise levels at the park site, which could disturb nearby residents. Park use, including vehicles traveling to and from the park, would also result in changes in project-area noise levels. Existing noise levels within the project area will be determined through noise monitoring and projected noise levels associated with construction and operation will be identified in the EIR.

Air Quality - Construction activities would produce short-term increases in air pollutant emissions. Long-term emissions would be associated with vehicle trips and limited maintenance activities at the park. Each of these potential air quality impacts will be assessed and identified in the EIR.

Hazardous Material - The potential for use or disturbance of hazardous materials during construction, as well as the potential for worker/public exposure to, or release of such materials to the environment, will be addressed in the EIR.

Cultural Resources - Construction activities would create the potential for disturbance of cultural and historical resources that may be present within the project area. A literature

review and surveys will be conducted to identify the presence of cultural resources within the project area. Identified resources will be evaluated for significance and appropriately treated. The EIR will also contain provisions for the identification and treatment of cultural resources that may be discovered during construction activities.

Visual Resources - The park would alter the visual characteristics of the area and would add night lighting. Park facilities and landscaping would be designed with aesthetic appeal as a guiding factor, and no adverse impacts are anticipated as a result of the park's presence in general. Potential light and glare impacts associated with night lighting will be assessed and mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts will be included as available.

Land Use - The Proposed Project will be evaluated for consistency with the County General Plan and potential effects on surrounding land uses.

5 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Written comments regarding the project and the scope of the EIR should be provided to the County prior to July 31, 2003, to ensure their consideration. Written comments should be sent to:

El Dorado County, Division of Airports, Parks, and Grounds
c/o Mr. Gary Hyden
3000 Fairlane Court, Suite 1
Placerville, California 95667

A project scoping meeting will be held at which agencies and members of the public will be provided an opportunity to offer oral comments concerning the NOP and the scope of the proposed project and environmental analyses. The scoping meeting is scheduled at the following time and location:

Wednesday, June 4, 2003 - 7:00 PM
El Dorado Hills Fire Department, Station 85
990 Lassen Lane (near intersection of El Dorado Hills Blvd and Serrano Parkway)
El Dorado Hills, California

Following the receipt of agency and public comments regarding this NOP, the County will prepare and distribute a Draft EIR. The Draft EIR will include detailed descriptions of the Proposed Project and alternatives; a discussion of the alternatives evaluation and selection process; a description of the impact analyses including methods, assumptions, and pertinent results; and identification of proposed mitigation measures that would serve to avoid or reduce potential impacts. Agency and public comments on the Draft EIR will be accepted during a 45-day review period. Following the receipt of comments on the Draft EIR, a Final EIR will be prepared that includes responses to the comments received and any necessary revisions based on such comments.