EL DORADO HILLS CSD TO PRESENT CONCEPTUAL PLAN FOR BASS LAKE REGIONAL PARK AT EL DORADO COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION FEBRUARY 25, 2021

By John Davey

The El Dorado Hills Community Services District (EDH CSD) will be making a presentation of their pre-application Conceptual designs and plans for the proposed 200-plus acre Bass Lake Regional Park at the February 25th meeting of the El Dorado County Planning Commission.

The presentation is informational only, seeking feedback from the Planning Commission, and the Commissioners will be taking no formal action on the Regional Park proposal.

County Staff memos have been published including information from the initial Technical Advisory Committee meeting (TAC) that took place January 11, 2021.

Some of the feedback generated by the January 11th TAC meeting included some questions about some discrepancies from the Project Narrative, and the initial plans being submitted in the pre-application.

The El Dorado County Transportation Department provided the following feedback:

Access: There are two existing access points to the western portion of the project. The internal parking and circulation of the project provide connectivity between these two access points. One new isolated access is proposed off Bass Lake Road on the eastern side of the project.

The existing entrance to existing Selwood Park, off Serrano Parkway. This is proposed to be the main entrance to the western portion of the site, which is anticipated to generate the heaviest use. The project proposes to improve this entrance to an intersection type roadway encroachment to Serrano Parkway. Construction of a left turn pocket bay eastbound Serrano Parkway is highly recommended. DOT anticipates the project Traffic Impact Study (TIS) will identify this left turn pocket as a necessary improvement, and due to pm peak hour traffic demand, may require a traffic signal due to either Level of Service and/or traffic signal warrants. This intersection is too close to the Serrano Parkway / Bass Lake Road intersection for a traffic signal to be functional. This driveway may have to be moved, or alternative layout examined, pending the results of the TIS.

The second access point is the existing access that was constructed for EID operations at the lake. The project proposes to improve this entrance to an intersection type roadway encroachment to Bass Lake Road: A left turn pocket exists at this location, however the TIS should determine if the existing storage length is sufficient for the project traffic demand.

A new third access point to the project is proposed on the east side of the project to serve the Museum and Educational Center, and provide access to the project Trail system. At this juncture, it would be appropriate to point out that the application is internally inconsistent. The Project Narrative describes this access point as being at the intersection of -

BALD EAGLES AT BASS LAKE

By Kathy Prevost

My first encounter with a bald eagle was while walking one of the trails at Wildwood Regional Park in Thousand Oaks, California. We happened upon this enormous raptor very much enjoying his tasty rabbit snack on the ground not far from the trail. He paid little attention to us but we were very fascinated with him.

Bald eagles (Haliaeetus leucocephalus), our national bird and symbol of the United States, became a protected species in 1940 and they have been on the Seal of the President of the United States since 1782.

Adult birds have pure white heads and tails while younger birds are mostly brown mottled with varying amounts of white and acquire their adult plumage at four to five years of age. Historically, they were abundant and widespread in California but no historical information exists on the population size.

They are one of North America's largest sea eagles usually weighing about eight to fourteen lbs. with a wingspan of six and a half to eight feet. Their bodies can range from two feet to just over three feet long. The females are generally larger than the males and the birds in the northern United States are typically bigger than those in the southern areas of their breeding range.

Weighing up to seventeen lbs., the Alaskan bald eagles are the largest of the bald eagles which can live to be around twenty to thirty years of age in the wild and build the largest nest of any North American bird with nests as deep as thirteen feet and up to eight feet wide and some weighing as much as two thousand lbs. Usually, they return to the same nest every year and often mate for life, however, if one member of the pair should disappear the remaining eagle will often find a new mate.

Reportedly, they can fly (continued on page 2)
BASS LAKE PARK AT EDC PLANNING COMMISSION FEB 25th (con’t)

- Silver Springs Parkway and Bass Lake Road (currently under construction). However, the current site plan shows this access opposite Madera Way. DOT has long planned for the east access to the park to be located at the Silver Springs Parkway location, and strongly suggests the site plan be updated to match the Project Narrative (and the Environmental Project Description) once submitted for formal review.

The County’s General Plan strongly suggests Portland cement concrete curbs, gutters and sidewalks within Community Regions. However, DOT feels that this urban streetscape may be out of character with the neighborhood, as the existing Bass Lake Road is constructed without such improvements. Additionally, the larger eastern portion of the site is proposed as a passive use park, and remain largely unchanged by the project. A "Design Waiver" to construct roadway/ frontage improvements similar to the Bass Lake Hills Specific Plan major roadways, may be received favorably by the Community and decision makers. It is suggested that urban streetscape (curb, gutter and sidewalk) be proposed on Serrano Parkway, and on Bass Lake Road from Serrano Parkway north to the Bass Lake Driveway. For the eastern portion of the project along Bass Lake Road, frontage improvements would, at a minimum, include potential shoulder widening of Bass Lake Road along the project side, and a Class I shared use trail as shown in the County’s Active Transportation Plan (ATP). An equivalent on-site trail may be proposed as a substitute for the Trail called out in the ATP. The El Dorado County Transportation Commission should be consulted for their review and concurrence that your proposed trail would be considered an equivalent replacement for the ATP trail.

Recent Development in the Serrano Development (Village J7) brought to light concerns by the residents of Bridlewood Canyon and the Bass Lake Action Committee highlighted community concerns with regards to the intersection of Bass Lake Road and Bridlewood Drive. DOT believes a commitment to construct a round-about intersection at this location would be well received by the Community.

Additional questions from the County DOT Transportation Planning unit included:

Some differences in the uses between the TIS (Traffic Impact Study) under development and the project description.

The TIS considers 3 soccer fields, and this reports 2 soccer fields, and 2 softball fields (4 total fields). The Event Center was not included in the TIS.

The El Dorado Hills Fire Department offered the following areas of concern in relation their policies:

Policy 5.7.2.1 Fire Protection
Emergency Water Supply: project site is not currently provided with an adequate means of emergency water supply, storage or conveyance facilities.

Roads & Driveways: The project roads shall provide for safe access for emergency fire equipment and civilian evacuation concurrently and must provide unobstructed traffic circulation during a wildfire emergency

Policy 6.2.1 Defensible Space
Defensible Space: The project shall submit a Wildfire Urban Interface (WUI) Fire Safe Plan to the fire district for review and approval as required by California Fire Code

Policy 6.2.3 Adequate Fire Protection
New Buildings and Structures: Table 3 on Page 10 of the Initial Study document needs to be updated to reflect that all buildings and structures require permits and regulatory approval by EDHFD.

El Dorado Irrigation (EID) feedback:

The EDH CSD has not approached the District for new service associated with the proposed development at the Bass Lake Site.

El Dorado County Environmental Management Department feedback:

Application states that "Water, sewer, storm drain, and electrical will be installed and interconnected with existing facilities. All parcels for this project have confirmed water service provided by the El Dorado Irrigation District.

Only one parcel, APN 123-280-010, has confirmed public sewer. Please confirm that the remaining parcels, APN 115-400-022, APN 115-400-021, and APN 115-400-002, will be serviced by public sewer as well.

A concession stand, multi-use event center, and museum are proposed for the Bass Lake Regional Park project. The concession stand and any other operation that stores, prepares, packages, serves, vend, or otherwise provides food for human consumption at the retail level is required to be constructed and operated to the standards of the California Retail Food Code. This includes undergoing a plan review prior to facility construction and operation with an annual health permit issued by the El Dorado County Environmental Management Department once the facility has been constructed and is ready to begin operations.

This initial feedback from public agencies and departments will help the El Dorado Hills CSD shape and tailor the project to address these concerns, and provide a park project that is in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act, as well as ordinances from local agencies.

A project of this size and scope is an enormous undertaking, and one that has long been anticipated by Bass Lake area residents. It is not something that can be accomplished without significant preparation and analysis by the El Dorado Hills CSD, who have worked on this project for many years, seeking resident input along the way.

From the County Planning Department’s Staff Memo: The Next Steps

There is likely to be an additional Conceptual Review Workshop the Board of Supervisors in late March or early April.

Environmental Review: EDH CSD is currently working with a consultant to prepare an environmental analysis for the proposed park with the EDH CSD acting as the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). County staff will provide information to EDH CSD during preparation of the CEQA document and will provide formal comments during the public review period.

Discretionary Permit Application: Subsequent to approval of the CEQA document by EDH CSD’s Board of Directors, the EDH CSD is anticipated to formally submit for an application(s) for a discretionary permit(s) to the El Dorado County Planning Department.

Based on the proposed uses and existing zoning, the applications would include Planned Development Permit (PD), which would establish an official Development Plan for the regional park, and a Rezone application, which would establish common zoning designations to all affected parcels.
BASS LAKE

(continued)

- fly as high as ten thousand feet and as much as a hundred miles in a day. Their diet consists of small animals, waterfowl, fish as well as carrion, including salmon, deer and cattle.

Their range is within North America including Alaska, Canada and the lower forty eight states and Northwest Mexico. They winter throughout much of California at lakes, reservoirs, rivers, some range lands and coastal wetlands. Their breeding habitats are mainly in the Northern California Mountains, foothill forests and woodlands near reservoirs.

In most of California, the breeding season is approximately from January through July or August and one or two eggs (occasionally three) generally are laid in late winter or early spring with an incubation period of about thirty five days. Chicks leave the nest at about eleven to twelve weeks of age and will take off on their own with many flying hundreds of miles north joining other young birds before returning to California a few months later.

Some bald eagle's nest in the northwestern states and provinces but spend their winters in California arriving in the fall and early winter. These birds may stay until February or March, or even into April, before returning to their nesting areas which could be as far north as central Canada two thousand miles away.

They may also nest in scattered locations in the central and southern Sierra Nevada Mountains and foothills as well as several locations from the central coast range to inland Southern California, the Channel Islands and on Santa Catalina Island.

El Dorado County is a particularly ideal place to nest, and in the past, several bald eagle pairs have set up housekeeping raising their brood at various lakes and reservoirs including Stumpy Meadows Reservoir, Jenkinson Lake and Union Valley Reservoir. Forest service staff has reported that Loon Lake and Hell Hole Reservoir have also attracted eagles but the nesting areas are less accessible for monitoring.

In a 2017 Mountain Democrat article, Jesse Saich, public information officer for the El Dorado Irrigation District, reported there is a nesting pair of the lake that usually don't see very many, Lake Tahoe held the first bald eagle count in 1979 and for a few years there were only two or three bald eagles per year with no bald eagles found in 1980. Since that time the numbers have started to rise and numbers have averaged in the low twenties in recent years. ~

Bass Lake Bulletin

EL DORADO HILLS COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTOR ALLAN PRIEST ANNOUNCES MOVE TO PLACERVILLE

By John Davey

At the February 11th Board of Directors meeting of the El Dorado Hills Community Services District (EDH CSD), Director Allan Priest announced that his family will be relocating to Placerville, and that his last day serving as an elected Director on the EDH CSD Board will be May 15, 2021.

Due to Director Priest’s elected term expiring in December 2022, the EDH CSD Board of Directors will be appointing a replacement to serve the balance of the term after Director Priest steps down from the EDH CSD Board in May.

EDH CSD Director Allan Priest

The Bass Lake Action Committee wishes to extend best wishes to Director Priest and his family in their new home, and thank him for his many years of commitment to our community – serving not only as an elected director on the EDH CSD Board, but for his active engagement in the El Dorado Hills Community. Director Priest has roles on the boards of the EDH Promise Foundation, and the El Dorado Community Foundation, on the cabinet of the El Dorado Hills Endowment, and on the Advisory Council for the Assistance League, Sierra Foothills.

Director Priest has been a stalwart advocate in the responsible planning and development of the Bass Lake Regional Park, and has always made himself available to assist constituents and the community.
A SIMPLE AFTERNOON
WALK TURNED INTO A WALK RICH IN HISTORY AND LORE

By Tasha Boutselis Camacho

In January, my husband and I took a walk in a Folsom neighborhood that we had not visited before. At the end of the pathway was a plaque that provided some history of goldminer Thomas Rhoads, and the Rhoads Diggins site located in Folsom. Our surrounding areas are filled in gold mining history!

The term "dry diggings" was coined where no water was required for harvesting because the gold was found near the surface of the ground. Miners worked with tools such as knives, pieces of iron, pointed sticks and even spoons to pick out the gold. Although additional research needs to be done to discover the actual location of the Diggins site, it has been fun to speculate if it is under the power towers, near a community park, or just hidden for future generations to discover.

As the story goes, Rhoads and his family eventually settled in Utah, where he was responsible for opening the Deseret Mint, by using some of the $17,000.00 in gold from Folsom and outlying areas.

Coincidentally we have been fascinated by a series called Mystery at Blind Frog Ranch. This show is about a man, Duane Ollinger, who purchased land in eastern Utah, and he and a few men have been searching for buried treasures and caves on this property. In addition to searching for hidden treasure, these men have discovered an energy field on the property which is causing strange happenings, extraterrestrial finds, and the idea of shape-shifters on the land.

The week after taking the walk and reading about Rhoads Diggins, we were watching this show and they mentioned that a gentleman by the name of Thomas Rhoads laid claim to mining the property back in the 1850s. This connection had piqued my curiosity!
President’s Letter - (con’t)
- near the North Pole but this year some of the vortex broke off and moved south bringing the severe cold weather into the US and Europe which will last at least until the end of the week from the Midwest to the East Coast.

El Dorado County Home Sales
According to Ken Calhoun in his latest article in the Home Source magazine from the Mountain Democrat, California’s systemic housing shortage has been exaggerated by the Corona virus and state housing economists are estimating there are shortages of about 3 million units to accommodate current demand. The previous demand for high-density urban housing has declined while more people are continuing to move to the suburbs and rural counties.

He reported the median selling price of a home in El Dorado County was $576,000 last month as opposed to a year ago when it was $425,000. Last year there were 260 million dollar homes sold which has exaggerated the median price. Homes are continuing to sell quickly with multiple offers and are typically on the market for 12 days and selling for 69% over listing price.

With the sales of more expensive homes increasing, there is very little affordable housing which had previously been about 19% of the residential listings. Currently there are only 185 single family homes listed when typically there would be 400 to 500 homes for sale at this time of year. The California Association of Realtors is projecting a modest 4.4% increase in price for the spring because they believe there will be a seasonal increase in listings from sellers who have been waiting this past year.

El Dorado Hills Community Services District (EDHCSD) General Manager’s Report Feb 2021

While not taking a position on the subject of support or opposition to incorporation of El Dorado Hills, in early 2020, the El Dorado Hills Community District (EDHCSD) management solicited proposals from seven consultants firms for an incorporation analysis to determine if incorporation of El Dorado Hills would pass the fatal flaw test of a high level financial feasibility analysis.

The District formed a Board Ad Hoc

VOLUNTEER GROUP SEEKS TO PROTECT, PRESERVE ICONIC EL DORADO HILLS MONUMENT SIGN

By John Davey

Over the past several months, many El Dorado Hills residents have noticed the vandalism of the El Dorado Hills monument sign south of US 50 close to El Dorado County line. Many locals have been asking why there was orange construction netting around the sign – with more members of the community asking about the temporary metal construction fencing that was installed around the historic sign.


The sign on the south side of US50 is on property owned by the Rolling Hills Community Services District – a local district that serves about 400 homeowners. Their principal obligations are the operation and maintenance of Berkshire Park, and to maintain the public roads within the district.

The Rolling Hills property where the EDH Monument sign is located is private property. There are signs posted that it is private property, and that no trespassing is allowed. For years, a tradition among El Dorado Hills students is to take photos at the sign. Frequently used as a social hangout, visitors climb the sign, and leave large amounts of trash.

The sign had the benefit of a revitalization project by a local boy scout troop in 2005. In recent years, local landscape and concrete construction company JWA provided some mortar repair to the sign at no cost – the Rolling Hills CSD only had to provide the materials.

However, the sign itself is failing structurally in several places, partially due to the age of the mortar and the fact that trespassers continue to climb it. Significant amounts of broken glass from bottles litter the area all around the sign. Many of the large rocks on the facing of the sign are loose or falling off.

Due to the exposure of liability from trespassers climbing the sign, and to prevent further damage to the sign, the Rolling Hills CSD placed metal construction fencing around the sign as a last resort. Unfortunately, even after the fence had been installed, the sign was vandalized again with spray paint. And once again, a few weeks later. Even new No Trespassing Signs were vandalized.

The Rolling Hills CSD cannot continue to fund repairs to the sign from vandalism. Filing insurance claims on the sign would result in increasing insurance premiums, or, possibly, having the policy dropped. The Rolling Hills CSD have been explored many avenues in regards to the sign – from temporary repairs, rebuilding, replacement, or even removing the sign. The costs for each of these options is significant. Much more so, when considering that the costs would have to be funded by a district of only 400 properties.

A volunteer group of El Dorado Hills residents began looking for solutions. The group is comprised of residents from all areas of El Dorado Hills, who view the sign as a valuable part of El Dorado Hills’ history, which needs protection, and preservation. Short of the old El Dorado Hills Executive Golf Course, the El Dorado Hills Monument Signs are the most enduring aspects of the beginning of our area’s modern history, reaching back to the development of El Dorado Hills.

The “Save Our Sign” volunteer committee members are Wade Klintobe, Susan Stokes, James Albertoni, Shelly Ronan, Arnold Peters, Mark Keener, Bill Rogers, and John Davey.

The Save Our Sign committee has been working with a Monument Sign Ad Hoc Committee of the Rolling Hills CSD, comprised of Rolling Hills CSD Directors Brenda Collette, and Gordon Fawkes.

After several weeks of research, and consultation with the Rolling Hills CSD, the Save Our Sign committee has spoken with several local agencies, business groups, and non-profits. Interested parties include the El Dorado Hills Chamber of Commerce, the El Dorado Hills Community Services District, and the El Dorado Community Foundation. Guidance is also being sought from other area non-profits.

Determining that a complete solution will take time to develop, the -
President's Letter - (con't)

- Committee for Incorporation Analysis and the Ad Hoc Committee and Management sought interest from stakeholder agencies to form a Working Group to discuss how to proceed. The El Dorado Irrigation District, El Dorado Fire and the El Dorado County Sheriff’s Office were interested and chose to be part of the Working Group. EDC LAFCO (Local Area Formation Committee), also, decided to accept their invitation and was able to provide good guidance and useful information.

The Working Group developed a scope of work and a list of potential consultants for the Preliminary Comprehensive Fiscal Analysis (PCFA). If the analysis finds incorporation would be financially feasible, then a comprehensive fiscal analysis could be conducted. The draft was reviewed with several community stakeholders from the business and housing development community and with their input the scope of work was refined and additional consultants were suggested.

Of the seven consultants, five responded and the Berkson Associates’ proposal was chosen for its clarity and understanding of the necessary work that needed to be accomplished. The contract timeline will be six months and the cost of the work is $49,260 with an additional $5000 to analyze the inclusion or exclusion of other local agencies. EED and EDH Fire have each committed $5000 to the study.

It was suggested that an additional $7500 for the analysis of incorporated boundaries and for alternative service options should be allocated and the total cost of the contract is $61,760 which was presented to the Board for approval at their February 11, EDHCSD Board meeting.

EDHCSD LLAD Agenda Item Feb 11

The CSD Board of Directors was also planning to direct the preparation of the Annual Engineer's Reports for the Lighting and Landscape Districts #1-41 which included Bass Lake Village B as agenda item Number 16, Resolution 2021-01. The Bass Lake Action Committee submitted a letter because we had questions and concerns regarding the significant reduction of the landscaping as well as how the future assessments would be handled. The letter may be viewed here: http://basslakeaction.net/blac-llad-feb-2021

Respectfully,
Kathy Prevost President
Bass Lake Action Committee

Bass Lake Bulletin

EDH SIGN VOLUNTEERS (con’t)

- Save Our Sign committee sought permission from the Rolling Hills CSD to perform a cleanup of the vandalized sign – due to the structural failing of the sign itself, the temporary construction fencing must remain in place.

A cleanup day was scheduled for February 6th. The sign was vandalized again around February 4th, with more spray paint. On the morning of February 6th, the Save Our Sign volunteers arrived on site, signed the required waivers with the Rolling Hills CSD, and began to haul paint, sandpaper, paint brushes, rollers, ladders, chemical cleaners, water, trash bags, and more supplies to the sign – upon arrival, it was discovered that a local resident had already visited the sign on the evening of February 5th, and used white spray paint to cover up the vandalism. While the Save Our Sign committee deeply appreciated the intent of the unknown crime fighter, the property is posted as no trespassing, and the sign remains private property. The Rolling Hills CSD requests that anyone wishing to volunteer to cleanup the sign, and the area, first seek permission, and complete the required waivers.

The Save Our Sign cleanup crew cleaned, sanded, and repainted the El Dorado Hills letters with a fresh coat of white acrylic paint, picked up trash, and removed the temporary orange construction netting. For now, the metal construction fencing must remain in place, until the structure can be secured from additional damage.

Requests were made to the El Dorado Hills Fire Department to add some increased patrolling in the EHD Monument sign area.

The Save Our Sign committee also would like to thank El Dorado Hills Fire Department Deputy Chief Mike Lilienthal for his efforts to facilitate increased Sheriff patrols in the area, through his role as Public Safety Lead on the El Dorado Hills Community Council.

The Rolling Hills CSD asks the community to respect the NO TRESPASSING signs, and the private property status, by not entering the property or visiting the sign.

The Save Our Sign committee has submitted a request to the Rolling Hills CSD to pursue solutions for restoring and preserving the El Dorado Hills Monument Sign, with the help of area non-profits. Moving forward, there will likely be an opportunity for the community to contribute to fundraising and clean up efforts to help protect and preserve the sign.

Rolling Hills CSD Director Brenda Collette, Aronold Peters, John Davey, Mark Keener, Rolling Hills CSD Director Gordon Fawkes, Wade Kintobe, and James Albertoni.

image credit - Alexandra Kintobe

B.L.A.C. HOLDS FIRST QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING OF 2021

The Bass Lake Action Committee first Quarterly Board meeting of 2021 was held virtually, on February 8th.

The Treasurer's report included an update about the 2021 Membership Renewal effort. Treasurer Wil Brunet reported that all renewal letters had been sent, and had already generated a very positive response.

If you haven't renewed yet, please mail your responses, using the self-addressed envelope included in the letter.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for May 10, 2021 at 7PM. All B.L.A.C. Members are invited to attend. Members will receive an email invitation that will include the Zoom Link and instructions for attending the meeting.

For further information about BLAC meetings and membership, please contact Vice-President John Davey at 530-676-2657, or email blaskmemembers@gmail.com.

Residents can also apply via our online membership form at http://basslakeaction.net/members ~

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