



MEMORANDUM

Date: April 12, 2011

To: Arcata City Council

From: Open Space and Agriculture Committee

Re: Open Space and Agriculture Committee Annual Report to the Arcata City Council

Committee Members:

Lisa Brown
Kirk Cohune
Uri Driscoll
Steve Lovett (Chair)
Julie Perry
Emily Sinkhorn
Danielle Stubblefield

Mark Andre, Staff Liaison and Environmental Services Director

Introduction

The Open Space and Agriculture Committee (OSC) will complete its eleventh year this March 2011. During this last year the Committee has been involved in a variety of issues and projects. Over the course of 2010, the committee picked up several new members. The following is a brief summary of our activities during the past year.

Input on Restorations/Acquisitions/Development Projects, Reports, and Plans

The Committee reviewed several proposed City land acquisitions, housing development projects proposed within the City limits, and provided comments directly to landowners/development teams including:

- Provided comments on Campbell Apartments development project on Samoa and Union Streets.
- Acquired the Stromberg 23 acre forest property and the Stromberg 6 acre open space parcel in the Sunnybrae area and the Moranda 3.4 acre Janes Creek parcel.
- The committee continues to review and monitor the County General Plan update and still supports General Plan A of the Open Space and Forest Resources Element, which affords the greatest protection for open space. The committee made recommendations regarding the Open Space element of the General Plan including advising for advocating Community Forests, establishing building setbacks adjacent to the Arcata Community Forest and requiring trails and connectivity in new county subdivisions.

- Continuation of the fundraising subcommittee to assist with efforts to raise funds locally via events and activities.
- Continued with the agriculture subcommittee to work closely with the agricultural community in areas that further the goals of the City's Open Space and Agriculture Plan.
- The committee recommended several grant applications submitted by the City for open space acquisitions.

Goals for 2011

With the continued economic recession the committee recommends that polling for a potential Open Space ballot measure be delayed once again this year. We hope to continue our goal of an open space district at some point in the future. Other goals include:

- Increase effective communication between the other City committees.
- Improve education and outreach initiatives.
- Promote the economic benefits of open space and the relationship with the Arcata Economic Development Strategic Plan.
- Assist staff with fundraising acquisitions by creating community awareness and involvement.
- Provide recommendations on City grant applications for open space funding requests and federal and state policies affecting open space and agriculture resources.
- Provide recommendations to the City Council, Planning Commission and staff as needed.
- Provide recommendations of potential open space acquisitions and develop new relationships with other potential partners such as foundations.
- Continue reviewing and supporting potential trails in and around Arcata and to outlying areas in Eureka, Blue Lake and McKinleyville.
- Continue to investigate the potential for a western greenbelt and working with local land trusts and other interested partners to maximize effectiveness.
- Conclude the committee's review and input on the Baylands Management Plan.
- Assist the City in every possible way to finalize the Morris, Green Diamond, Schmidbauer and Humphry property acquisitions.

We look forward to continuing to serve the citizens of Arcata and the Council in meeting the open space goals and policies of the General Plan 2020.