

Nakaji, Scott

From: Nakaji, Scott
Sent: Tuesday, June 24, 2008 9:03 AM
To: Robert Schroeder; Laura Caballero; Mike Finnegan; Richard Johnson
Subject: City/Lake Natoma Issues
Attachments: The grant application characterizes State Parks as one of the biggest supporters of the project.doc

FYI. Attached is a document that I gave to Folsom City Manager Kerry Miller at our meeting on January 3rd voicing State Parks concerns about the application that was submitted to the Resources Agency. This prompted the City to consider pulling their application or modifying the scope. They chose to modify the scope, but we did not receive a copy of the final document.

Scott

- The grant application characterizes State Parks as one of the biggest supporters of the project. Although we have discussed potential concepts, State Parks does not endorse or support several of the concepts presented in the application. In fact State Parks withheld providing a letter of support for the application (requested by the City) because we were not satisfied with the resolution of numerous issues.
- Development status was characterized in the application as "have received commitments from State Parks and the US Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) to proceed with the project." The application further states that "the City has an agreement from the US Bureau of Reclamation and State Parks Department," and that the "Bureau of Reclamation has provided a letter approving the project."
- State Parks has made no commitments to the City to proceed with the project. In speaking with Reclamation personnel, there are also no current or conceptual agreements that have been discussed between the City and Reclamation. No approvals or permits of any kind have been obtained from either State Parks or the US Bureau of Reclamation.
- The application states "State Parks has indicated that when the trail is completed they will conduct regular guided nature walks for all age groups along this new section of trail." State Parks has made no such indication of staffing and funding interpretive efforts such as guided nature walks on this proposed portion of trail.
- The application states "The boat launch area will provide a service that is not currently available on the south side of Lake Natoma." This is not an accurate statement as the Willow Creek sub-unit of Folsom Lake State Recreation Area, which is located within the City, has a boat launch area. In fact, the Willow Creek boat ramp and parking area will be undergoing an improvement project in the near future to better serve the public within the city limits.
- The dock proposed in the City grant application will require some regular patrol and enforcement presence. State Parks is not necessarily interested in creating this use dynamic at this site and the subsequent management burden. State Parks is not sure that it best serves park visitors to have the City operate this boat dock – this may create confusion on who is responsible for management and enforcement.
- State Parks is concerned that use on a boat launch/boat dock will not actually be utilized as the City envisions. It does not appear that the City has surveyed paddlers on the lake, existing State Park concessionaires who operate trips on the Lake, the Aquatic Center or others regarding whether or not lake users would land at the dock, leave their craft

unattended and walk to the City's historic district or have a meal in their paddling garb. People can get a bit wet paddling a canoe or kayak. Often paddling garb is not suited for walking City streets or visiting a restaurant. The City's vision of public use at this location does not appear to be consistent with the actual activities of the majority of our aquatic lake users.

- The proposal does not identify where people would leave their canoes or kayaks. The small dock identified in the project would not have sufficient room to leave boats on the dock or tied to the dock, it would prevent others from accessing the dock. These problems are compounded if the City envisions small motorboats mooring at this dock. Paddlers would likely be reluctant to leave a plastic or composite canoe or kayak – with a value of anywhere from \$500 to \$3000 – out of their sight and unattended while they walk around the City. Particularly if the dock is being used by people swimming or hanging out, which is one of the uses that we have found consistently occurs on our other docks around Lake Natoma (see below).
- Our experience at other docks we have developed and manage at Lake Natoma is that these facilities get used for unintended purposes as much (if not more in some cases) as for their intended boat launching and landing function. This includes use as a platform for swimming and diving, fishing, model boat use, sunbathing, and as a location to install temporary ramps for kids on bikes to use as a jump into the water. The docks at Lake Natoma often attract large numbers of young people to swim, play and hang out on the docks. The rocks on both sides of the Lake in the area of this proposed dock already attract many young people for swimming and sunbathing – they will likely usurp this dock.
- In previous discussions with the City, staff has indicated that the proposed boat dock would be for people wishing to land and access the Historic District. The grant application characterizes the dock as a boat launching facility. If that is the intended use, there is no location identified for people to park their vehicles and stage their equipment to launch at this site. We previously expressed to the City that we do not think the site under the Bridge on the south side of the Lake is an appropriate boat launching location: a long walk down a steep bank (or trail); there are inadequate parking and staging areas; there are no restroom facilities; etc.
- The application states that "State Parks and Folsom have worked together to put this application together and will continue to work together to prepare final design and construction." Gold Fields District Planner Jim Micheaels provided State Parks' input to Folsom City Senior Planner Jim Konopka for this document. Unfortunately, State Parks' input expressing concerns regarding project scoping and the concepts contained in the

application was ignored (see attached e-mail correspondence from Jim Micheaels to Jim Konopka). We presume that State Parks' concerns were relayed to City management prior to the submission of the application.

- The application states that "The City and California State Parks have been working together for many years to complete this segment of trail and fulfilling long term goal of providing barrier free access to the Lake Natoma shoreline and improving recreational opportunities." This is not the segment of trail that the City and State Parks has been working together on for years. The segment of trail that State Parks supports is located further up river between the Lake Natoma Inn and the Folsom Powerhouse State Historic Park. This section of trail that State Parks supports is the segment that would provide the final connection for the Lake Natoma loop.
- State Park staff has been very clear to City staff about the concerns we have regarding concepts contained in the City's proposed project. Unfortunately, the City elected to move forward with the grant application without addressing and resolving numerous issues and even expanding upon others with the full knowledge of State Parks' concerns. As State Parks is under the umbrella of the Resources Agency, the granting entity, in order to maintain our integrity we need to address what we see as incorrect characterizations in the City's grant application. If the Resources Agency contacts State Parks about this grant application we will be clear and truthful about the portions of the proposal which have our support, those that do not and the unresolved issues we see with the plan. Additionally, it does not appear that Reclamation staff has been contacted to provide input on the specific proposals contained in this project.
- I am fully supportive of listening to proposals and discussing potential projects that bring mutual benefits to the City, State Parks and Reclamation. To be honest, throughout the years I have heard numerous proposals from City staff and local developers on behalf of the City that are not consistent with the State Parks mission. While there might be benefit to the development interests in the City, based on our experience operating recreation areas and facilities on Lake Natoma I question the real public benefit of the concepts contained in this specific proposal. Additionally, I am not certain that use will occur as envisioned by the City thereby minimizing any benefit to the City, State Parks and Reclamation. For these reasons, and with the mischaracterizations contained in this grant application and the unresolved issues regarding the proposed project, I cannot support it at this time.