Task Force Members Present:
Frank Croft; Bill Konle; Michael Patterson; Kathy Raider; Doug Reynaud; Carla Ruigh; Brian Seifert; Mary-Lou Fitzpatrick; Richard Von Bargen;

Task Force Members Absent:
Brent Bear, Fadi Saba, Jan Webb, Alicia Borowski

Review Task Force Meeting Notes
The Task Force Meeting #9 notes were accepted.

Presentation on the Draft Preferred Alternative
The Draft Preferred Alternative was presented with follow-up discussion, community comments, and direction from the Task Force as noted below. It was noted that this was a draft and there is opportunity to revise the plan based on Task Force direction. It was also explained that the intent was to create a “consensus” plan, one that is supported by a strong majority of the Task Force, not a simple majority or a split vote.

Community Comments

- One community member mentioned that he looks at open space in the county, sees lots of trails and open space, but doesn’t see people or horses on the trails. He questioned whether there is such a great need for trails, and whether there has been a survey of actual trail use.
- Another community member mentioned that she hears parks department staff (rangers) state that there aren’t many equestrians using the park, but she never sees a ranger when she is riding! Trails are getting paved over and there are fewer and fewer places accessible for equestrians. The Parks Commission recommended purchase of the property as a RANCH, as a rural park, not for a golf course. The golf course is not a good idea. She would like to know if equestrian camping will be by permit or by reservation. It seems that small groups of equestrian camping could be by reservation, while a large group (such as a NATRAC event with 100 rigs) would be by permit. On another note, the Boulder Ridge golf course just went bankrupt.
- Another community member mentioned that while she has heard concerns about water quality in San Martin, she hauls her water to friends in Morgan Hill and Cupertino because it tastes so good.
- One community member mentioned that there are 99 golf courses in the Myrtle Beach area and there haven’t been any cumulative environmental problems.
- Alternative 3a would also be acceptable provided that the golf course is designed for low water use. There would need to be accessible trails around the golf course with some trails for horse-drawn cart use.
- Prefer Mendoza site for equestrian camping.
- Supports special event equestrian camping on the west side.
- Hang gliders/paragliders would like to see a launch site identified on the plan. The landing site is appreciated.
**Task Force Member Comments**

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Do you support DRAFT Preferred Alternative as presented?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kathy Rairden</td>
<td>Would support 18-hole golf course.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mary Lou Fitzpatrick</td>
<td>Supports golf course. Likes the financial support the golf course provides.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Richard Von Bargen</td>
<td>Supports accommodating everyone. Supports the golf course.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bill Konle</td>
<td>Supports a golf course. Would recommend leaving the golf course size open. Would also recommend separating Bear Ranch from Coyote Lake as two separate parks. Would like to see the number of NCGA members.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Carla Ruigh</td>
<td>Has leaned away from the golf course. Both golf and equestrian uses are fairly low when considering the entire population, based on state surveys. Would recommend finding more uses for the west flat area that meet recreation needs. Is concerned about the financial reality of creating an affordable golf course with lots of environmental constraints. Supports minimal intrusions on the Mendoza property.</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>Michael Patterson</td>
<td>Does not support the golf course for financial, as well as environmental reasons. Is concerned about the cumulative and long-term impact of two golf courses within 1/4 mile of each other. What happens if a future golf course management company is not environmentally responsible? Does not feel that there should be an expectation that the park generate revenue. In past elections, taxpayers have supported the Parks Department and value the service it provides to the County. The Audubon Society has expressed an interest in being a partner for restoration.</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Comment</td>
<td>Support</td>
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<td>Michael Patterson (cont.)</td>
<td>Other comments: concern about pedestrian safety if campground is located on the opposite side of the road from the boat launch area.</td>
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<td>Brian Seifert</td>
<td>Concern about visual aspect of the golf course, as well as financial projections. Golf course revenues would not necessarily support other uses at the park. Also questions validity of the potential environmental benefits of the golf course. Neighbors of the park want to see minimal development. Other comments: Does not support road realignment to Mendoza Property. This visual gem should not be ruined by a new road. Would recommend a covered arena.</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Doug Reynaud</td>
<td>The property was purchased to maintain ranchland character in South County. This is not a personal philosophical issue. The golf course is myopic. The eco-system could be re-created without the golf course. This is the perfect environment for tiger salamanders, for example. The golf course was not part of the original plan and this is too much of a compromise. Supports minimal use of the Mendoza Ranch.</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frank Croft</td>
<td>The west flat area is the most accessible and should be the heart of where recreation takes place. We should be looking at the top 10 recreational activities as noted in the State survey and try to address as many of those as possible in the west flat area. Golf is not one of these.</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>Fadi Saba (not at meeting-Comments submitted in writing prior to meeting and reprinted here)</td>
<td>The West Flat Area is the most discussed – and rightly so, for it is nearest to the communities. The South Valley community will continue to grow; yet it is also important to keep in mind that this is a regional facility. With those two comments in mind, let me share my thoughts on the proposed preferred alternative.</td>
<td>No</td>
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Fadi Saba (cont.)

I would support Alt. 1, with some alteration. Those being enhancements that Alt. 2 provides. Turning the West Flat Area into an environmental, educational, historical, and recreational facility would be a great gift to the residents of Santa Clara County, specifically South County. I think that it is critical that we protect and not in a token way, the historical nature of the area; upgrade the environment that was destroyed by using practices that encourage native vegetation; allow for both to become educational opportunities for our youth (and adults), while still allowing for community picnic areas. This, in my opinion is the best for the West Flat Area. The majority of the people would have access and opportunities in an area that is close to home.

I cannot support any of the Alt. 3a, 3b or the Preferred Alternative. They all include a golf course as part of the plan. Golf Courses are environmentally hazardous and would waste most, if not all, of the only flat area on the Bear Ranch property. On average, golf courses use some 500,000 gallons of water per day to keep the Green green. Since we are neither Scotland nor Ireland, I have a hard time justifying this. As for recycled water, it would require linking with the Purple Pipes (recycled water pipelines) that do not reach this area and would be extremely expensive. In addition to the waste of water, the amount of chemicals used on golf courses is too much to gamble. These chemicals are not only bad when they seep into the ground, but don’t allow for wildlife to flourish.

I understand that many of you are concerned about funding and completion of the park. But do keep in mind that this is a park, not a commodity up for grabs. We need to take ourselves out of the business world – for we are a taskforce – and talk of what we really want.

The financial aspect of this project is important, but the state and foundations DO have funds for us to use for restoration of habitat, preservation of historic sites, etc. I know it can be done without a golf course.

As our mission statement states, the parks dept. should “provide, protect and preserve” parklands for future generations and us. Let us provide a decent park for a diversity of uses – in the flat area to the lake area, that protects the environment when making policy, and preserve the natural and historical character of our parklands.

Thank you for your time and I am really sorry for not being able to join you tonight.

Brent Bear (not at meeting -- comments on Draft Plan received by phone conversation.)

Supports golf course element. Has received both positive and negative comments on it from the general community. Supports the need for varied forms of recreation.

Concerned that people have idealized farming and ranching and ignore the negative impacts. Wants people to really think about what they mean when they talk about a working/educational farm.
Position of support for the golf had not changed since the March Task Force Meeting. Potential financial benefits are attractive to support other park developments.

Task Force Conclusions and Direction

It was clear from the Task Force discussion that there was not consensus for the plan as presented. After further discussion, and indication that the west flat area may be seen as a potential location for fair activities if recreation activities are limited, the Task Force direction was to prepare a revised preferred alternative without a golf course, but with other recreational activities. The focus should be on “inclusive” uses (general recreational uses such as hiking, nature appreciation and camping) as opposed to “exclusive” (uses that may limit or restrict recreational use such as agricultural production or mitigation banking). It was suggested to focus on uses that are found in the California survey of most desired recreational activities.

- Consider camping, RV’s OK without RV hook-ups
- More extensive trails through a variety of habitats, looking at existing drainage patterns
- Consider some paved trails for year-round accessibility and use by skaters and bicyclists
- Delete realigned access road from the plan

With these thoughts in mind, Lee will revise the preferred alternative for Task Force review. It was concluded to postpone the community meeting scheduled for May 16th, and instead have a Task Force meeting to review the revised draft preferred alternative. A progress report will be presented to the Parks and Recreation Commission on May 1, which Task Force members are encouraged to attend.

Next Task Force Meeting: Thursday May 16th, 6:30 p.m.