

# SACRAMENTO VALLEY OAK WOODLANDS AND DEER CREEK HILLS PUBLIC OUTREACH

## **Rancho Murieta Public Workshop**

February 1, 2005

### **1. General Questions**

- How did we arrive at initial costs for planning effort?  
*Needs to go through some type of environmental review*
- What are costs to manage property?
- Expanded outreach programs to include school groups?
- Fence maintenance in budget?
- Who are other landowners?
- Strategies for pest control?- i.e. feral animals
- What are the politics between SVC and the owner group?
- Is money the only limit for SVC management in terms of fully implementing its master plan?

### **2. ISSUES & CONCERNS**

- Make sure public use is of equal value [priority] to habitat priorities
- Avoid impacting working ranches
- Provide support for the Rancho Murieta community open space needs – address general area’s issues of oak removal and mitigation for removal
- Greater [public] exposure equals greater risk for cultural, historical & archeological resources
- [Ensure that preserve is] guaranteed in perpetuity
- Security [risks] along Latrobe Road
- Maintaining upkeep of Preserve property with more people using it
- Compatibility between habitat and grazing – especially the riparian areas
- [High] Fire danger of area
- Fragmentation land dividing into smaller lots – loss of connectivity
- Economics of keeping working ranching viable
- Introduction of problem plant species or other invasives from greater public use
- Avoiding the “Los Angelization” effect [for region]

### **3. IDENTIFIED OPPORTUNITIES**

- Objective should be about more just preserving habitat - it should be about restoring habitat as well
- Promote community volunteer services

## **SACRAMENTO VALLEY OAK WOODLANDS AND DEER CREEK HILLS PUBLIC OUTREACH**

- Good opportunity to educate public about ranching
- Consider hunting: such as dove hunting, fishing or consumptive uses??
- The challenge is to combine the mix of potential uses
- Focus on high school kids- the purpose and process including acquisition process etc. are all important for them to know
- There are lots of research opportunities
- Look at higher end – agricultural type uses i.e. organic farms – organic lambs etc.
- Give public opportunity for open space – stewardship
- Urban center kids near by – education value
- Keep it the way it is – it already is high value – existing grazing practices help maintain character
- Potential to expand resource area to include greater area
- Opportunity for finding mutual benefits between ranching and public uses
- Great opportunity to [develop] additional recreational opportunities

### **4. ADVICE**

- Learn from other Models: How to keep it wild?
  - Point Reyes National Seashore –
  - East Bay Regional Parks
  - Stone Lake
  - American River Parkway
  - Cosumnes River preserve
- Create ownership arrangements - stewardship
- Use private operations
- Sign-in or register or membership type concept instead of open to general public
- Need more staff
- More cross fencing to manage properly

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## **Break out Group Notes**

### **Group One**

- Don't over analyze! -- don't want to lead to paralysis!
- But! Planning approach needs to be very careful
- Aim for generalized type management document and learn from other examples!
- Keep the process simple but provide general policy language that allows for adaptation and expansion – not too many whistles and bells!
- Think of this process as model for other similar partnerships- based on restoration efforts
- Approach [planning] slowly – “conservatively” use adaptive management
- [always keep in mind] What is the objective? What are the [end state] conditions to aim for?
- Emphasize small success rather than big failure

### **Specific Ideas:**

- Consider acquiring Latrobe road from County – control access
- Learn from other examples - Don't reinvent the wheel  
Look at PGE Forest Park – turned over to state similar management component  
TNC- projects – like Cosumnes Preserve  
Grey Lodge (DFG TNC)  
Spenceville Wildlife Area: DFG- Blue Oak habitat area (Going through land management planning)
- SVC should continue to look broadly – look at enlarging boundaries
- Huge challenge is the different missions of the basic partnership group
- Education versus habitat restoration – needs management control not benign neglect
- Look at youth investment program – associations (such as Tides Foundation)

### **GRAZING**

- Divide the use areas of the property – keep public and cattle apart  
grazing will phase out
- eventually evolve to greater open public access
- Will lose Blue Oaks if grazing is not seriously controlled
- Grazing strategy - divide uses - emphasize land management approach

### **Group 2**

- Mitigation- identify locations in Master Plan; use of source of funding
- Designate trails – school groups docent-led – keep grazing - good

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- Habitat restoration
- Recreation/public access
- Promote agriculture use (grazing)

## GRAZING & PUBLIC ACCESS

- Learn from others (Pt. Reyes) (EBRPD)
- Separate trail use instead of multi-use trails
- Look ahead when planning plan incrementally over time
- Abide by agreements (ranching)
- Adaptive management w/implementation of plan i.e. potential recreation uses, birding-hiking and solitude
- Natural landscape – respect the quiet
- mandatory update every 5-10 years

## Group 3

- Impact of people? How much acceptable?
- Habitat vs. cattle grazing  
Can be compatible – using grazing animals to help w/habitat for birds, oaks, creeks- set habitat goals!
- Economic viability of grazing – how much at one time?
- People use – mix with cattle? Open gates? Camping? Hunting? No dogs quota of access? Help with habitat restoration projects? Ongoing neighbor communication?
- Use projections?

## [BASIC] NEEDS

- Security-
- bathrooms –
- water –
- garbage –
- parking –
- fire control –
- revenue –
- fencing/gates –
- roads/trails –
- signage – staff –
- ADA access –
- power

## GRAZING /NEEDS

- Is grazing first priority? Or a by product?
- Year round vs. winter?

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## NEEDS

- Cowboys (double as security?)
- Power –
- horses –
- corral –
- housing –
- water –
- Stock ponds –
- fences/gates –
- Vermin control
- Can people walk with cattle?
- How to manage the brush cover under oaks – grasslands?

## HABITAT:NEEDS:

- ID Invasive species
- Oak regeneration
- Water
- Fences
- Historical evaluation of habitat
- Enhancing flood control
- [Restoration] wish list
- Need to gather other experience

## WAYS TO BLENDING

- Common needs/ communication with neighbors
- Water – staff – security/cowboys
- Revenue/trails

## PEOPLE – PUBLIC

- Habitat restoration
- Trash removal
- Education about cattle

## NATURAL HABITAT

- Oaks enhance
- Grasslands
- Growth/soil quality

## **Group 4**

## **Concerns**

## **SACRAMENTO VALLEY OAK WOODLANDS AND DEER CREEK HILLS PUBLIC OUTREACH**

1. Public will abuse the landscape (vandals, teen parties, fire starting, trash dumping, conflicts with neighbors). Will there be adequate law enforcement?
2. How will park fit into over all master plan for local parks?

### **Opportunities?**

1. Family oriented activity such as hiking, biking (slow speed), and picnicking.
2. Nature Studies for local schools
3. Small group camping (under supervision of some type).
4. Equestrian.
5. Property provides a stepping-stone to increase and connect open space.
6. DCH can provide a focal point for community building activities such as volunteer clean-up parties, theme picnics promoting unity).

### **Facilitating the three uses at DCH: Recreation, Conservation and Cattle Grazing**

#### **Maintaining Conservation:**

1. Maintain a balance in the number of both people and cattle using the site. Don't allow over-grazing and over-recreation.
2. Provide alternative sources of water to draw the cattle away from sensitive habitats (i.e. riparian).
3. Fence cattle out of sensitive habitats.

#### **Combining Cattle and Recreation:**

1. Restrict people during the grazing season.
2. Restricting the types of recreation to non-motorized use.
3. Separate cattle and people using fencing.

#### **Reducing People problems associated with Recreation:**

1. Restrict park hours (Dawn to Dusk) to limit problem activity.
2. Provide adequate # of law enforcement to handle and prevent problems.
3. Consider a membership program to promote user responsibly and sense of ownership.