

MONTEREY AUDUBON SOCIETY

A chapter of the National Audubon Society; Celebrating, Exploring, Conserving & Restoring the Birds & Ecology of the Greater Monterey Bay Region Since 1943



montereyaudubon.org

Press Release

The following information has been approved for release to all media networks and affected parties. Wide distribution is encouraged.

LAGUNA GRANDE PARK

Monterey Audubon Society is declaring short term success and limited success in long term goals to protect Laguna Grande Park.

Starting approximately three years ago, Monterey Audubon intervened in an escalation of vegetation destruction due to illegal activities within the park. After community support and ongoing efforts, Monterey Audubon was invited to meet with representatives of the Laguna Grande Park Joint Powers Authority (LGP JPA). This month representatives from Monterey City, Seaside City, Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District (MPRPD), and Monterey Audubon successfully met to review current and future actions for Laguna Grande Park. Monterey Audubon, MPRPD and the cities of Seaside and Monterey are now working closely to identify and implement the best means of maintaining the park's natural habitat, while concurrently providing an enjoyable, educational, and safe experience for the public.

SHORT TERM GOALS

It was unanimously agreed that the cities of Monterey and Seaside would prioritize minimizing illegal activities, with emphasis on protecting areas of key habitat, primarily on the prevention of illegal vegetation clearing and illegal cutting of trees. This would also include keeping illegal camping out of the park as much as possible, which would also increase the public's safety and enjoyment of the park. City resources, including both regular staff and law enforcement, would be used to accomplish these goals.

LONG TERM GOALS

Agency staff will propose to the LGP JPA to hire an outside resource to conduct a full park analysis along with independent recommendations for future management. This analysis will be comprehensive and include all facets of the park, including but not limited to: water management, flood control, vegetation management, public access, biological protections, maintenance, and public amenities.

- The LGP JPA assured that the analysis will be done with the community and other agency (i.e. Monterey Audubon) involvement.
- The analysis could take between 2-3 years due to the comprehensive nature.
- Both cities have assured maintaining short term goals are a priority until the analysis is complete.

It was agreed by all parties, including Monterey Audubon, that without completion of a proper analysis, Monterey Audubon's MPRPD grant application is premature and grant money would not be maximized. Therefore, Monterey Audubon will forego pursuing MPRPD grant money until the analysis is complete. In the future, when tangible ways are ready for implementation and grant money is both needed and can be maximized, Monterey Audubon will entertain submitting an application.

Monterey Audubon's proposal

A full analysis of the park coupled with short term mitigation of illegal activities is welcomed. As such, Monterey Audubon is supportive of holding off on further efforts of rehabilitation until the analysis is complete. Monterey Audubon's proposal will be submitted to the analysis for consideration of future management recommendations.

Donated funds

Monterey Audubon has secured donated funds for use on public amenities related to the park (i.e. educational signage). Both during and after the analysis, donors can be assured these funds will be put to use for their intended purpose.

Community action

The community is encouraged to stay educated and participatory in both the short and long term goals for the park. Community cleanup efforts are planned for the future and the community is encouraged to help with enforcement by reporting illegal activities in the park. Please use the following guide for how to report different activities.

NON-EMERGENCY ACTIVITY (i.e. illegal camping, littering, vegetation removal, public intoxication, drug dealing, large scale trash dumping, purposeful contamination of the water)

Area: Roberts Lake. Along the lake and trail from In-N-Out Burger around to behind Chili's and to the playground, the wooded and picnic areas East of the foot bridge from the playground to Fremont Blvd.

Contact: Seaside City official *Seaside Police Department 831-394-6811*

Area: South side of Laguna Grande lake from the foot bridge to In-N-Out burger.

Contact: *Monterey Police Department 831-646-3914*

EMERGENCIES (i.e. fires of any kind, theft, intoxicated subject being aggressive, suspicious activity)

Area: Any

Call 9-1-1

Be prepared to give: location where it is taking place (including nearest cross-streets), what is occurring, description of the persons involved (including clothing), and any vehicles involved (including make, model, license plate).

The Audubon Society would like to thank the members of the LGP JPA - the Cities of Monterey, Seaside and the Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District - for their cooperation and assistance in this effort.

Wishing everyone a Happy New Year!

MONTEREY AUDUBON SOCIETY CONTACT:

For questions or concerns directed to Monterey Audubon:

Chris Hartzell

Monterey Audubon Society

www.montereyaudubon.org

montereyaudubon@yahoo.com

831-277-2811