



NAPA COUNTY REGIONAL PARK &
OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

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May 9, 2022

Mr. Steve Lederer
Director of Public Works
County of Napa
1195 Third Street, Ste 101
Napa, Calif. 94559

As regards: The terminus of Conn Valley Road, parking, and the Hennessey Unit of Moore Creek Park

Dear Steve,

I write this letter, at your request, to describe the current condition of the roadway terminus of Conn Valley Road, the public parking that occurs there including parking for the Hennessey Unit of Moore Creek Park, and a proposal to address the issue with the help of the County. The proposal is a result of a number of conversations and in-person meetings between the Open Space District, owners of residential property at the southern end of Conn Valley Road, representatives of the Napa County Sheriff's Office, and the local office of the California Highway Patrol.

Issue

The official entrance to Moore Creek Park is located on Chiles-Pope Valley Road, where the Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District (NCRPOSD) has a dedicated off-street +/-48 car parking lot serving both the Moore Creek and Hennessey units of the park. NCRPOSD makes a concerted point of only promoting the Chiles-Pope Valley entrance. However, it is both possible and permissible to access Moore Creek Park from the eastern end of Conn Valley Road. People also park along Conn Valley Road to go fishing in Lake Hennessey or to use a longstanding informal City of Napa picnic area adjacent to the lake, neither of which are part of Moore Creek Park proper.

Visitors to Lake Hennessey (many of them local and from points up valley) have used Conn Valley to access Lake Hennessey for many decades and in more recent times various internet guides have discovered and promote the Conn Valley access to visitors from further afield. As a result, there are times when more people try to park at the dead-end of Conn Valley Road than can be accommodated. Neighboring property owners complain that during peak periods it has been common to find cars parked partially in the travel lane in a manner that could impede emergency vehicle access. With the continuing three-fold increase in parks usage that began during the COVID-19 pandemic, the problem has been exacerbated.

Except for the 250 feet of wide shoulder near the access to Lake Hennessey, the last 1,000 feet of Conn Valley Road is curved, the paved roadway width varies between approximately 15 feet to 30 feet wide, and the roadway does not have any shoulders or parking lanes, so parking on both sides of the road can restrict travel to only one lane width. This segment of Conn Valley Road is rural and all properties have sufficient off-street parking, so the demand for on-street parking is almost solely from visitors to Lake Hennessey and/or the adjacent Moore Creek Park.

In 2018, faced with the same parking issue and a related problem of a lack of space to turn large vehicles around at the end of the dead-end road, the Board of Supervisors adopted Resolution R-2018-115, establishing a No Parking zone on both sides of the eastern most 50 feet of Conn Valley Road near the Moore Creek Park Entrance. A No Parking zone on the north side of the road for the last 1,000 feet before the Moore Creek Park entrance and Conn Valley Road terminus was also considered at the staff level at the time, but that proposal did not make it into the Resolution that ultimately went to the Board of Supervisors on August 28, 2018.

Given the location of Conn Valley Road adjacent to Lake Hennessey and the unnamed drainage that flows into the lake due south of the roadway, there is no room to add additional parking at the roadway terminus. Improvements to allow some additional parking at the informal City of Napa picnic area +/- 750 feet to the east were discussed at some length in 2018 but were ultimately withdrawn due to the strong objections of a neighboring residential property owner who would have been able to see the parking area from her residence. Given the nature of Conn Valley Road's somewhat remote location and the fact that it is a long, winding dead-end roadway, NCRPOSD staff does not believe it is the best place to invest District or County resources on developing substantial new parking amenities.

Proposal

The Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District does not employ peace officers with the power to cite for vehicle code violations. While the eastern end of Conn Valley Road is somewhat remote, both the Sheriff's Office and the Highway Patrol have voiced a willingness to do some additional vehicle code enforcement at that location, focused on vehicles that are parked in the travel lane. They ask, however, for some changes they believe would make that enforcement more effective.

1. Extend the No Parking zone that now exists at the turnaround at the end along both sides of the road down well-past the City of Napa's "picnic area" (approximately 1,000' further to the east) excepting the two existing parking areas called out on the attached graphic.
2. Ensure that the No Parking zone at the terminus of Conn Valley Road is extended to at least 75' to improve large vehicle turnaround at the roadway dead end.
3. Paint a white line indicating the edge of the maintained roadway in the two existing parking areas, so that officers can more defensibly ticket people parked over that line in the maintained roadway in and adjacent to the existing parking areas.

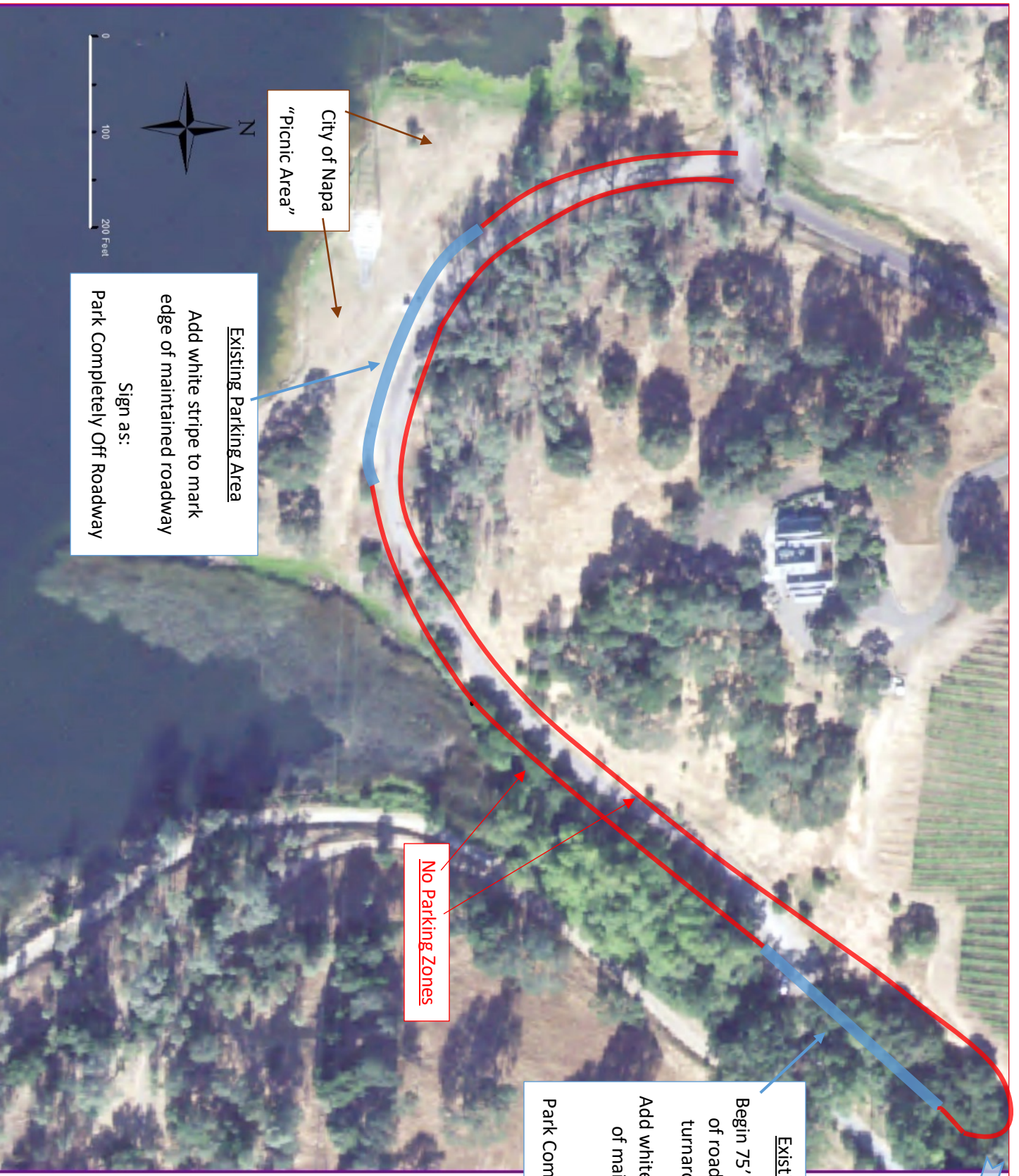
4. Install signs at the existing parking areas saying something like “park entirely off roadway”.

Thanks for your time and attention on this. If you or your staff need any additional information or have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'CC', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Chris Cahill
General Manager



City of Napa
"Picnic Area"

Existing Parking Area
Add white stripe to mark
edge of maintained roadway
Park Completely Off Roadway
Sign as:

No Parking Zones

Existing Parking Area
Begin 75' from mailbox at end
of road (to improve truck
turnaround at dead end)
Add white stripe to mark edge
of maintained roadway
Park Completely Off Roadway
Sign as:

M.C.P. Conn
Valley Access
Gate (approx..)